

Mexican Life

Mexico's Monthly Review

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Water Color

By Ramón Valdiosera




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HOWARD S. PHILLIPS

EDITOR

The Government's Economic Policy

HOW to strengthen the nation's debilitated economy has been the avowed aim of President Ruiz Cortines ever since he assumed his high post a year and a half ago. This aim has been crystallized in a definite program which can be summarized in the following points: to curb the rise in the level of prices by stimulating the production of prime necessity goods; to achieve a balanced production in agriculture and industry; to strive for a more equitable distribution of national income; to reduce the influx of foreign capital by encouraging internal investments.

This economic policy, being basically different from the one pursued by the preceding administration, inevitably created a period of readjustment and recession. 1953 was not a prosperous year for industry and commerce because it actually defined a period of drastic change from a policy of fictitious prosperity through inflation—a prosperity that benefited the few and was detrimental to the many—to one that seeks a stable and balanced prosperity through a valid increase of national wealth and its equitable distribution.

Drawing our information from the annual report of the Bank of Mexico (Mexico's Federal Bank of Issue), which comprises a comprehensive and authoritative survey of the country's economic situation, we perceive that the period of readjustment has reached its final phase. The economic policy introduced by President Ruiz Cortines is beginning to bear practical results, and there are clear indications of a gradual improvement in business conditions during the rest of this year.

The most significant item in the Bank of Mexico report is related to the distribution of bank credits during the foregone year. In keeping with the official policy, all credits for non-productive operations have been curtailed to the minimum, the available funds being largely assigned for productive enterprise. Hence, while one billion one hundred and forty million pesos went to finance agricultural and industrial production, only one hundred and fifty million pesos were employed to finance commercial activities.

These figures amply demonstrate that the government's credit policies, tending to combat price-inflation, are being applied to the fullest extent. If, moreover, we take in consideration the fact that of the total sum of credits extended for productive enterprise 62.7% were destined for the production of food commodities, we perceive that the government is fulfilling its aim to create an abundant supply of prime necessities, that it is effectively confronting Mexico's major problem of agricultural under-production.

And although the marked increase in the volume of credits has tended to increase during the foregone year the volume of currency in circulation by some 10%, this has not contributed toward further price inflation. On the contrary, wholesale prices have declined during the year by 1.9% and retail prices by 2.7%. This slight decline in prices must be largely attributed to the curtailment of speculative or middlemen credits.

This minor decline reveals that the prolonged period of price inflation has been brought to an end through the official financial policy. For, unfortunately, combined adverse natural circumstances have impeded to a certain extent the government's efforts to enlarge during the year the scope of agricultural production. Although the planted area was increased to an important extent, droughts, late frosts, floods and insect plagues have considerably reduced the anticipated volume of the national crop.

With a more abundant rainfall during recent months, and a replenished reserve of water in many dams that were almost totally depleted last year, and the further extension of cultivated areas, the agricultural prospects are much better for the present year.

As regards other fields, only two items have represented last year a significant gain. The volume of petroleum production was increased by 12%, and that of electric power by 7%.

Due to external factors, Mexico's exports declined to a marked degree in 1953, especially in mineral products. Seeking to counteract the adverse conditions in foreign markets, the government has revoked the 15% export duty on many items. Despite this measure, as in former years, Mexico ended the year with an unfavorable international trade balance. The present reserve of dollars held by the Bank of Mexico is, however, more or less equal to that of 1952, the unfavorable trade balance having been fully offset by the dollar income from tourist traffic and from cash remittances by Mexicans working in the United States.

Although the federal income during 1953, amounting to 4,359,004.00 pesos, was 465,004,000.00 pesos below that of the previous year, the expenditures, amounting to 4,603,009,000.00 pesos, were only 2% less than in the previous year.

The foregone figures reveal the salient aspects of Mexico's economic situation. It may be seen therefrom that the country has safely traversed the year of transition and, barring unforeseeable developments in the outside world or adverse circumstances of nature, guided by a firmly defined policy and a coordinated plan, is launched upon a course of wide and stable economic development.

Fiesta

By Kim Schee

DROP around at the house tomorrow afternoon," said Roy Barnshaw. "We're having a very novel fiesta."

"What do you mean by a very novel fiesta?" I asked.

"Come over and find out," said Roy and left me seated on a bench in the plaza.

I decided after a few moments of serious reflection that I wouldn't go because Roy is not what you'd call a simpatico gringo, but on second thought I decided I would go and that is because I started thinking about Roy's wife, Sonya, who is Russian and very pretty indeed and has that rare faculty of making every man feel like a potential lover. So, late next afternoon, I dropped around at Roy's house.

Roy hadn't exaggerated. It was a very novel fiesta. I soon learned from the few guests assembled in the patio that the fiesta was being given to celebrate the opening of a new bathroom which, according to Roy, Mexican labor had taken six months to build. I also learned that within fifteen minutes Sonya was going to inaugurate the bathroom in true Roman style by taking a bath. The bath, however, would take place behind closed doors. I suggested to Roy that the novelty of his fiesta would be greatly enhanced if Sonya took her bath with the doors open, but Roy thought the suggestion very crass and left me to my own devices. I soon found my way to the punch bowl and drank quite a few copas with a Mexican named Lupe Buenabad, who quickly told me that he was the plumber of the new bathroom and that he was very proud indeed of his handiwork. This, of course, led to several more copas, and by the time Sonya made her appearance Lupe was calling me little brother, and I had a dreadful feeling that with one more copa I would be his little father, so I managed to get away from the punch bowl and find a seat.

Sonya, as usual, had a magic effect on the guests. Swathed in a white, flowing negligee she could have doubled for Pierre Louys' Aphrodite. Before she had been in the patio ten minutes, everyone who had been sitting languidly on his backside saying nothing suddenly came to life, and for a while it looked as if the

fiesta was getting somewhere. A guitar was produced, and I found myself harmonizing tolerably well with two matronly Mexican women on "Panchita." But Roy, of course, wouldn't let well enough alone!

He got up on a chair and made a little speech in English apropos the new bathroom and then foolishly tried the same speech in Spanish; it sounded like a fingernail running across a blackboard. Then he crossed the patio, threw the doors of the bathroom open, and with a sort of combined mincing and clowning touched a match to the water-heater. Quickly there was a roaring fire, and the moment the pipes began to gurgle and thump Roy summoned Sonya to the bathroom. Sonya entered the bathroom à la Louis XVI and closed the door behind her, while Roy rejoined his guests in the patio.

Soon we heard the water pouring from the shower but no word whatsoever from Sonya. Noises from the pipes became more and more frantic, and a new and altogether unique staccatolike noise developed which sounded as if someone might be playing castanets with bricks. I turned to my little brother, the plumber, for an explanation.

"Señor," replied Lupe, slurring his vowels and draping his arm around my shoulder, "It is bootiful, bootiful music. For ten years I have been a plumber, and never have I known pipes to behave in such a way. It is wonderful, wonderful..."

"But something is definitely wrong," I said, trying to get him interested in the practical side.

"No doubt about it," he replied. "But just listen to those pipes. It is bootiful, bootiful..."

Meanwhile Roy began to communicate despartately with Sonya.

"Is there anything wrong, darling?" he shouted.

"No, doushka," she shouted back, "only there's no hot water."

"No hot water!" shouted Roy. "But there must be. You had better come out, darling, and let me investigate."

Sonya emerged in her negligee, and Roy entered the bathroom accompanied by several of his guests.

Continued on page 66



Water Color.

By Myrtle Frankovitz.



Water Color.

By Alfred Ybarra.

The Bells of Santa Catalina

By W. P. Covington-Lawson

MY great grandfather planted those trees," he said, pointing to the huge aguacates that lined both sides of the road in front of his shabby cantina. "My great grandfather wanted to shut out the view of Santa Catalina with its ugly jumble of adobe jacales, as well as the gaudy towers of the cathedral. He thought that these trees might temper the raucous bells that eternally clamoured in the belfries . . .

"He had inherited a vast domain from his father, who never saw the place, but because of political friendships in his native Spain was given the large land grant, duly inscribed on a parchment bearing the King's own seal and signature and presented to him by no less than his dear friend the Archbishop of Granada.

"My great grandfather inherited the land but not the beliefs of his parent. He had disavowed the church, Señor, and prided himself on his free thinking and ag-filtered through the foliage of the aguacate trees, while along the road bathed in their shade would wind religious processions, sometimes bearing a candle-fringed corpse, sometimes staggering under effigies of wobbling Saints. My great grandfather would fume and fret, but the bells tolled on and the processions shuffled along in dust or in rain.

"My grandfather who later inherited the plantation had been brought up by a fervently religious mother. He was educated in Spain and Italy and was blindly religious. He gave liberally to the church, nisticism. The sound of the cathedral bells, however, Caused several small chapels to be built on the plant-

ation, always had a resident priest on the place, and all dignitaries who passed hereabouts were housed and wined and dined in the great rooms of the hacienda mansion. For all his piety, he was not loved by his people—some five hundred families who toiled on the vast estate. He was austere, uncompromising, and felt secure in his authority. If any of his people suffered some misfortune, became ill or died, it was, he firmly believed, in retribution for original sin.

"He was a crafty man, this grandfather of mine, and whenever trouble brewed over the land and various revolutionary factions were at odds, he took no chances. He would depart for the Capital, but left orders that the winning General was to be housed and fed as was befitting his rank. And thus he managed to survive to a pleasant old age, hated, feared, but unmolested.

"My father inherited the lands and, partly, the character of the founder of the great estate. He loved people, particularly his people, and they responded completely to his friendly attitude. He was never happier than when out hunting with his gente, or fishing with the river folk.

"The cathedral was then a crumbling half ruin, the towers leaning, the bells cracked; but still, ragged little chair boys pulling on frayed knotted ropes sent their clamorous dissonance far and wide calling for obedience from the faithful. Only now there were not many faithful. Revolution after revolution had dimmed and dampened the ardour of both priests and parishioners, and fear and doubt became the heritage of the young . . .

"As to myself, Señor, I was reared in the United States. My father sent me, quite young, to live with the family of a distant kinsman in New Orleans. He had insisted that I be taught in the public schools, and was to be reared as a Mexican but also as a blood brother to the Americans. So I did not receive the usual religious training. I was soon to love the easy-going, carefree friends and schoolmates, who although Catholic like myself seemed to be imbued with a tolerance and an open mind. I lived in the surroundings of the bayou country, in a town that faced the Gulf of Mexico, whose waters laved the shores of my native land and seemed to ever whisper mysterious greetings.

"I had made it a practice to spend the Mardi Gras festivities with some school companions in Mobile. It was there, while dancing in the streets with the happy throng, that I felt a sudden tug on my arm, and there was my roommate. He gave me a cable which contained the news that my father had died two days before.

"I was still rather young, but now the time had come for me to take the reins that had been held in the hands of my ancestors for more than two hundred years.

"Like most great plantations, La Esperanza, mine now, practically ran by itself. Its rules and customs had not changed with the years. The administrator was the great grandson of the administrator of my great great grandfather's time. The *mozos* were the sons of the sons of the sons of *mozos* born on the place. When the majordomo would politely ask me, 'Don José, is it your wish that we should do this or that?' I knew full well that in all probability it had already been done—a road changed or widened; a new quarry started; another ten thousand coffee trees planted. . . . So I gave my assent as if it really mattered. And yet somehow I never seemed to be able to get the feeling or kinship with the soil and the people like my father had. Maybe it was due to my upbringing in the United States.

"After a few years here, I began to long again for the Louisiana marshes, the mysterious bayous, creole laughter, the warmth and hospitality of the Gulf people. . . . And yet, La Esperanza was my charge. I held a mandate. There were doors that had to be opened, and doors that had to be closed, and I was sole custodian of the keys. It was a thing that had to be kept intact, or it would fall to pieces. I could not let loose. I was the last of the Orellana Ortega y de Leon clan. I could not let them down. Without me—though I was certainly the poorest of all its rulers—La Esperanza would disintegrate. It would become the pawn of scheming lawyers for a myriad of distant cousins. . . . So I stayed on.

"I married Isabela Avila, the daughter of the administrator. She was good, gracious and kind. She felt that she belonged at La Esperanza, that she was part and parcel of it, and sought to keep things as they were, and as they must ever be. She had been born on the place, as had been her mother and grandmother. Her great grandmother was brought to the plantation to be mated with the administrator, after my great grandfather had paid a debt of ten thousand escudos owed by her father to the owner of Finca Dolores.

"Our whole world became reduced to La Esperanza, with all its daily problems, its tasks, its lives, its loves, its feasts and deaths. Seven hundred families were now scattered among its hills huddled in four tiny villages. And this world became complete when our heir was born. Now I was indeed the lord of my estate, and my lady was all that could be asked for. She was an efficient mistress of the household and found

time to help the sick and the needy among our people.

* * *

"Thank you, Señor. To your health."

"Yes, Señor. It seemed as if nothing, no power on earth, could ever upset our lives, could ever destroy the world that so kindly enclosed us. But nothing endures for ever, save only, perhaps, the rising and the setting sun. . . . Came the catastrophe. . . . Once, centuries ago, they say, the volcano Santa Maria had wiped out almost half of our state. That was, of course, long before my great grandfather played chess with the venerable Archbishop of Granada. But the belching volcano was an act of God, smiting the people for their many sins. The land was devastated, but after a couple of generations, people crept back into the lava-filled valleys, and presently grass, flowers and trees took root and bloomed again. . . .

"But with this last catastrophe God had little to do. In fact, it was a Godless chieftain who brought more havoc than the flaming vomit of Santa Maria. His army of malcontents swept over the land and like locusts consumed everything in their path. I do not know whether it was fear, cowardice or greed, but presently all my people joined the horde. And finally, it was my wife. . . . Perhaps, Señor, it was also cowardice or greed. Perhaps she joined him unwillingly, prompted by his promise to spare La Esperanza, and to spare our little son. Or it might have been a woman's weakness to venerate the conqueror and disdain the vanquished, a morbid fascination for the hangman. . . . I do not know.

She went away with him, Señor, and it was very strange that my own life was spared. Though I saw no earthly purpose in it, for two years they kept me in a dungeon beneath the cathedral, with only the moldy tombs of ancient bishops for companions. But the bells yet tolled overhead, making the glass shudder in the little window, and on still mornings I could hear the birds twitter in the aguacates. I endured this living death until things changed again. Men rose and fell by the sword, and finally the Godless chieftain was deposed and a new one came to rule the region. My enemy was gone, I was a free man. But La Esperanza was also gone. My wife, it seems, was capable of this one loyalty—she departed with her man, shared with him his debacle, and our boy, I learned presently, was dead.

"So there I was, a free man, shorn of everything but a feeble will to live. I faced the need to somehow start anew, and managed to get back to New Orleans, the place I came to love so deeply in my boyhood. I was back in New Orleans; but I soon found out that what was gone too. I kept moving. I wandered the length and breadth of the world and wherever I went it was the same. The place I yearned to find was not there. . . . So I came back. Came back to stay.

"And you know, Señor, strangely enough, the one thing that seems to calm my shattered nerves is the raucous jangle of the cracked bells there in that almost completely ruined cathedral—the noise that crowds through the aguacates my great grandfather planted as a shield. Yes. I came back, and I have been here ever since.

"Now, all that I have is this miserable little cantina—'El Ayer que no Nació.' But that is enough. My customers are the sons of the former workers on the plantation, now employed in the irrigation works. They call me 'el pobre viejo.' But they are wrong. I am really not a poor old one. I am very rich, but they do not know it. The chains of centuries have fallen from my wrists. . . . No need to further guard the jangling keys.

"La Esperanza, Señor? Why that is actually no

Continued on page 60



Photo.

By Robert Flynn.

The New Fire

By E. Adams Davis

It is possible that the tourist who visits the Valley of Mexico may have recommended to him a little village lying some half a dozen miles to the southeast of the metropolis. It is called Ixtapalapa, which means in the old Aztec idiom "the place of the precious black stones." Should his visit to this village occur on a weekday, he would find little to satisfy his taste for the curious; nothing, in fact beyond a pair of very old churches, one of which boasts some carved doors of exquisite beauty. Beyond that, he would find only a simple Indian village, no different from countless other villages, except that it obviously was inhabited long before Cortez became a conqueror. But should he come in the week following the fourth day of March, he would be able to witness one of the two most notable Passion plays in Mexico.

The more observing tourist will note at a short distance to the southeast of the village a low hill sloping up a hundred to a hundred and fifty meters above the valley floor, and if he be of the more curious and venturesome sort, he will try the dusty dirt road that winds to the top of the eminence. There the visitor will be rewarded with a most magnificent panoramic view of the valley. As he turns to leave, he may stumble over one of a profusion of large stones, some with rather smooth surfaces, that lie scattered about on the rocky ground. Wittingly or not, he stands upon one of the most important legendary spots in all the Great Valley of Mexico.

Many centuries past when the Great Valley was but a series of island-studded lakes, the little village of Ixtapalapa flourished and was a place of consequence. Lying on the southern rim of Lake Texcoco, on a narrow isthmus leading southward to Lake Xochimilco, it furnished many of the truck-garden pro-

ducts which were daily carried by boat across the lake to the busy markets of old Tenochtitlán, which is now Mexico City. Two large causeways ran from Ixtapalapa across the lake, one northward to the foot of the hill of Tepeyac, where the Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe now stands, and the other westward a short distance to another causeway which ran eastward from the ancient city of Churubuseo then turned north toward Tenochtitlán. Thus linked to the world of commerce, the little village nestled at the foot of El Cerro de la Estrella, "the Hill of the Star," a tiny mountain sacred in the annals of Aztec mythology.

During the old Toltec and Aztec days, Indian astronomers divided time into cycles of fifty-two years, months, and days. At the end of each fifty-two year period was celebrated La Fiesta del Fuego Nuevo, "the Festival of the New Fire," accounts of which have been handed down from generation to generation in the legends of the people, each generation changing the story slightly, until today it is quite different from the historical accounts written by the Aztec chroniclers on their sheets of maguey-fiber paper.

The Aztecs, like other primitive peoples, were haunted by the fear that at some time the sun might suddenly grow dim and fail to provide the heat and light necessary to preserve life on earth. So at the end of each fifty-two-year cycle they held a ceremony of new fires—a ceremony which was much like that had been held by the gods when Nānahuātzin and Teuēhēztlēatl had passed into the fire to emerge as the sun and the moon. It was at the same time an expression of man's gratitude for the sacrifice the two gods had made and a reminder to the gods of their duty should the occasion recur.

The ceremony began on the last day of the cycle.

As soon as the sun had appeared over the slopes of Ixtaccihuatl and Popocatepetl, the people of the valley began rendering useless all their household goods, for it was held that the new cycle must be started with new and unused furniture and utensils. As night approached everyone put on festive attire, and when the sun had passed over the western rim of the sierras, all the fires were extinguished, leaving the earth in total darkness. Then the chief citizens of each village, dressed in the costumes of the various gods, led the long procession of villagers on their march to the Hill of the Star. From all of the lake towns they came—from Tepeyac and Atzacapotzaleco, from Tacubaya, Mixcoac, Coyoacán and Xochimilco—in strange, silent processions winding along the trails and over the causeways, sheathed in the darkness of night.

Their departure had been so timed that all would reach the foot of El Cerro de la Estrella precisely at the hour of midnight. At that hour, thousands of tired villagers clustered around the little eminence. There were old men and old women, younger women heavy with child, exhausted children—all looking with excited and impatient eyes toward the summit.

On top of the hill was a temple, and toward it, along the winding path, moved the principals of the drama to be enacted. In front marched the high priests, costumed in their finest robes, their heads capped by ornate headdresses from which waved brightly colored plumes plucked from birds which had once winged their way over the waters of Pátzcuaro and Chapala and over the sluggish or turgid streams of more southerly lands. Vivid banners floated in the midnight air, and the low chant of the priests was all that broke the silence of the night. Behind the priests walked the two men who were to be sacrificed to the gods of light, two unfortunates who had been taken prisoners in war.

Arriving at the summit the priests mounted to the large, flat square at the very top of the temple. There

they divested themselves of their raiment and clothed themselves in only a square of white cloth, tied by two corners over one shoulder. Several of their number then retraced their steps down the stone stairs and proceeded to light the huge piles of wood which had been laid in a circle about the structure. Soon the fires blazed skyward so that the multitude was able to see the ceremony.

Outlined against the sky stood the small group of priests, surrounding the two men who were to be sacrificed. Soon the two sacrifices were lifted by the hands and feet and laid face-upward on the altar stones. Then, taking up a strange-looking device, a wooden, sunlike disk attached to a short pole, the high priest pressed it firmly several times against the chest of each man, and, at a signal, drew out short knives of volcanic glass. With swift, deft movements they opened the chests and withdrew the still pulsating hearts of the victims, which they held aloft for the multitude to see. At once a great shout went up, rocking the heavens and reverberating against the distant mountains. The high priest then lighted a small fire directly between the two sacrifices. It was fed until it spread across the altar, covering the bodies which lay upon it. At the same time, the fires below were allowed to die down so that only the great flame on the altar lighted the scene.

Another small procession now climbed slowly up the hill. These were the young men of the villages, bearing braziers for the carrying of fire. As they reached the top, the brazier of each was lighted, and the young men ran nimbly down the steps, toward the causeway, and along it to the city of Tenochtitlán. As they ran, the twinkling lights danced like a chain of earth-bound stars and the multitude turned from the altars to watch them as they disappeared through the gates of the city. Before long a huge flame of light

Continued on page 62

Hug Your Hunger, Brother

By Ryah Tumarkin Goodman

HUG your hunger, brother.

Do not barter, brother,

Other hungers for your own.

Have you known another

Hunger that could be a brother

To your own?

Choose a hunger, brother,

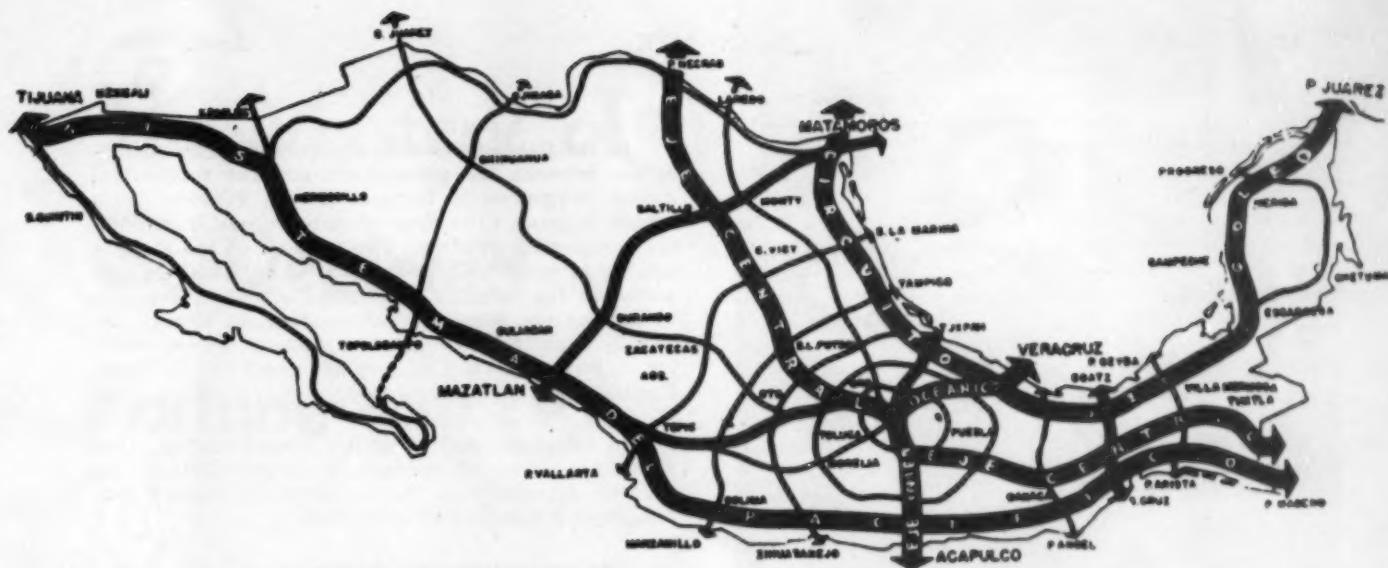
To exceed your wants, other

Goadung hungers of the flesh and bone.

Know your hunger, brother,

As another

Hunger of my own.



THE THREE MAJOR ROUTES OF COMMUNICATION WHICH ARE BEING CREATED BY THE SECRETARIAT OF COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC WORKS.

A Billion Pesos for Communications

By Stewart Morton

IN THE realm of communication the year 1954 has ushered in for Mexico a new era of vast expansion, the materialization of a master plan that will interlock the existing routes into an over-all system widely ramified over the entire map of the country. Representing the unparalleled investment during this year of more than a billion pesos, the constructive program which is being carried out by the Secretariat of Communications and Public Works under the able guidance of its chief Carlos Lazo, defines the aim voiced by President Ruiz Cortines in his initial report to the nation on September first of the foregone year. This aim is to integrate and coordinate all the systems of communication in such way that no section of national territory will remain isolated.

The master plan that has been formulated by the Secretariat of Communications, including highways, railways, navigable rivers and canals, aviation, telephone and telegraph systems, provides for the creation of three salient communication networks, as in the map reproduced above, and respectively designated as the Pacific System, the Central Axis and the Gulf Circuit. These three major systems, extending from the Northern to the Southern borders of Mexico, are joined by means of six concentric routes, which traverse the country from the Gulf to the Pacific and link the sea ports and coastal regions with the interior zones and all the principal cities. The network created by these three major systems is further ramified by numerous interlocking state and neighborhood roads.

The creation of these three systems will add that many new gateways between Mexico and the United States, which will greatly facilitate international travel as well as import and export, and will serve as a practical means of stimulating good neighborhood. When the present plan is realized Mexico and the United States will be communicated along its borders by trunk highways extending south from the following points: Tijuana, Mexicali, Nogales, Ciudad Juarez,

Ojinaga, Piedras Negras, Nuevo Laredo and Matamoros.

The Pacific System, with its gateway at Tijuana, Baja California (in the vicinity of San Diego and Los Angeles, California), will extend southeast over the entire length of the Pacific coast to Hermosillo, Culiacán, Mazatlán, Puerto Vallarta, Manzanillo, Zihuatanejo, Acapulco, Puerto Angel, Salina Cruz and Puerto Madero on the Guatemala border.

The Central Axis route, extending southeast from Piedras Negras (South of Eagle Pass, Texas) to Saltillo, Mexico, D. F. and Oaxaca City, will also end at the Guatemala border.

The Gulf Circuit route, beginning at Matamoros (across the Rio Grande from Brownsville, Texas), follows the coastline of the Gulf of Mexico, by way of Tampico, Tuxpan, Veracruz, Campeche and Progreso, and ends at Puerto Juarez on the extreme eastern tip of Yucatán.

Crisscrossed by nine border to coast or coast to coast highways, those from Ojinaga to Topolobampo, from Matamoros to Mazatlán, from Soto la Marina to Puerto de Vallarta, from Tampico to Manzanillo, from Tuxpan to Zihuatanejo, from Tuxpan to Acapulco, from Veracruz to Puerto Angel, from Coatzacoalcos to Santa Cruz and from Puerto Ceyba to Puerto Arista—which, on the other hand, are further crisscrossed by numerous shorter intercommunicating routes—the three major routes truly represent an integrated plan of nation-wide communication.

* * *

This master plan has been formed after an exhaustive survey of the entire national territory and a detailed study of the international, national and regional importance of each composite link. Based

upon a consideration of specific local as well as general needs, it actually comprises a comprehensive and totally unified project.

The appropriation of the Secretariat of Communications and Public Works for the planning, construction and conservation of this signal project amounts to 996,194,000.00 pesos, plus the funds obtained through the cooperation of state and municipal governments, calculated at the basis of one third against two-thirds provided by the Federal government. Thus the total sum of the appropriation exceeds by a considerable margin the figure of a billion pesos.

The year's program includes the termination of works begun by previous administrations and the beginning of new intercommunicating routes. The work of extension and rehabilitation of the various railway systems operated by the Secretariat of Communications and Public Works, pursuing the aim of coordinating their operation with the National Railways system, is being furthered at an accelerated pace. Construction work is being continued on the Chihuahua-Pacific and Durango-Mazatlán railways, while extensive rehabilitation is being carried out on the Noreste, Pacific and Sureste lines. The narrow-gauge line between Campeche, Merida and Progreso, connected with the Sureste Railway, will be rehabilitated to standard gauge.

The gigantic task, extending to almost every part of the country, has been organized by the above Secretariat upon the basis of highest efficiency and economy. The planning and projecting of each work is being conducted upon a new and modified system. Construction and conservation is being carried out with more efficient methods, and each project is being executed at a respective unitary budget. New types of widely distributed contracts have been made, upon the primary consideration of obtaining the utmost results from available mechanical equipment and labor.

* * *

Among the works that are being realized at present, a very large proportion is being financed through cooperation of the Secretariat of Communication with different state governments or private interests, and by initiative of the recently created Committee of Neighborhood Communications. The scope of road construction which is being carried out at the present time is more than thirty percent greater than that of 1953. To be exact, some two hundred and seventy thoroughfares, ranging in type from super highways to short branch roads, are being either built or rehabilitated at this time in national territory.

Of these the following important highways are scheduled to be completed before the end of the year: the Mexico-Veracruz Highway, in its two branches, through Jalapa or Orizaba, and the totally reconstructed highway between Mexico City and Acapulco.

New Federal traffic regulations are being applied on the roads. The Highway Police force has been reorganized along modern lines.

* * *

In the field of aviation, a degree of fuller coordination between the government and the commercial airline companies is being achieved, whereby it is sought to expand the scope of national and international commercial aviation. The purpose of the government is to encourage the training of land and air personnel at the recently established school of aviation, to further the possibility of creating an aircraft assembly plant in Mexico, and to promote the construction and rehabilitation of airports along the Gulf and Pacific routes.

In telephone and telegraph communication, new works have been commenced in various parts of the country, especially in the southeastern regions that hitherto have lacked such utilities.

The great contingent of workers employed in this nation-wide project is being provided by the government with suitable sanitary quarters, medical attention, school and recreational facilities.

* * *

The ultimate social and economic benefits Mexico will receive from the master plan that is being materialized by the present administration are beyond calculation. The highways and railways that are spreading far and wide over the country are providing new vital arteries of national progress. They will redeem from agelong isolation great extensions of potentially rich territory. Through them millions of socially (and materially retarded inhabitants will be brought into contact with the rest of the world. With an outside market for their local produce placed at their disposal they will gain a new incentive to work and to produce more than their bare necessities. A possibility to travel beyond the deserts, mountains or jungles which surround their communities and to see how other people live will arouse in them a quite normal desire to improve their own existence.

The new roads will stimulate and modernize agricultural production in many undeveloped though highly fertile regions, and thus will create a more abundant supply of food in the rapidly growing cities, thereby effectively helping to bring down the greatly inflated costs of living. They will facilitate mining and petroleum exploitation and will likewise accelerate the process of industrialization by creating new markets of distribution for manufactured goods, and by bringing new industries to sites abounding in raw materials.

But above all, the creation of communication will contribute toward the stamping out of static regionalism; it will serve as a powerful factor of national social integration among the divided and heterogeneous sectors of Mexico's population, cleaved within itself by differences of native languages, customs and traditions and by a wide disparity in economic standards. It will serve as a great medium of furthering culture, material well-being and national unity.

The Mystery of the Depleted Fortune

By Dane Chandos

EVER since I established myself in Ajijic I had kept small change in my living room, in a wooden box which was known as the fortune. "We needed flour and little peppercorns more than I had money for out of my daily," Candelaria would say, "and I took the little centavos out of the fortune."

Often, if I were out of doors, I sent one or other of the servants to take any small sum needed. I knew always roughly what was there, and if I had been robbed at all it was of such tiny amounts as to be inconsiderable. I did not think I had been robbed at all. But now suddenly the money started going, and not only the centavos. For a long time we did not have the fat silver pesos, but instead dirty little scraps of paper, and these peso bills were disappearing from the box too, that is, if there were three or less, none went, but if there were more they did. This is a country where you are incessantly paying for things in small quantities, and I did not want to have to go about all day with my trouser pockets laden with piles of coin and my shirt pockets bulging with one-peso bills. The pilferer might have been any one of the servants, but I took to counting exactly what I had left in the fortune, and observation of times and opportunities soon left little doubt that it was Obdulia who was mulcting me. Mexican servants will take such things as sugar, or a little bottleful of kerosene, or rare objects such as pins, but it is most unusual for them to take coins or bills. Obdulia, though a clod, was a good worker, and the whole thing was disagreeable. My evidence was purely circumstantial, and after consideration I called all the servants together, told them what was happening, and said it had better stop. It was a painful interview. Afterward, one by one, they sought me out.

Lola lumbered up with a child clinging to her skirts and gesturing with a very dirty dishrag.

"It is three weeks, señor, since I have so much as been inside your room, and then as you know it was to fetch that book with the picture of two bulls." She pushed the child away from her skirts, and it began to howl. "And if you suspect me, señor, you have only to tell me, and I go to my house. You will know."

Cayetano was in the sulks.

"Once, señor, and once only, I took a little peso for me from the fortune, when you were out and there came a man selling huaraches for eight pesos and I had only seven, and I at once told you as soon as you came back. It was the day the señor of the oven sent you some slices of bread, very black and sticky. It was that Obdulia."



Oil.

By Camps Rivers.

But Obdulia's face wore its usual impenetrable blank.

"It is Nieves who does your room, señor," she said. "And I, look at my dress. If I had been taking money, would I not have bought a new one?"

Aurora came limping and whining.

"Of course, señor, I am the poorest, as everyone knows, and with all certainty you suspect me, especially since I only come to the house from time in time to bring the laundry or to inquire how you are, and the others will say it was I. I know who it was. It was Cayetano. But nobody will believe me, they will say I did it, and what can we do, pues?"

Nieves was in tears and almost unable to speak.

"Señor, señor, and you know that I send money to my brother who is studying to be a priest, but how could I steal and to what?"

Candelaria was outraged.

"Never, señor, never anywhere that I have worked, not with my compatriots, nor with foreign señoras from Hamburg and Bordeaux and the Canada, have I ever been accused of dishonesty. And if you want to know who it was, it was Lola, and Aurora, and Obdulia, and Cayetano and Silvanito. And that Nieves."

The incident was unpleasant, and I was still both hurt and cross when I told Mrs. Fountanney about it. I think I told her because she was about the only person who hadn't tried to run my household for me. She listened with her tortoise lids lowered as she stitched at her embroidery.

"Don't let it get you down," she said as her needle painted a coral-pink band below the faded smoke grays. "You know, when one doesn't have them any longer, there's nothing one misses so much as the little things that irritated one."

* * *

Just then an old and unfruitful nut tree at the edge of the huerta burst into flame. It was dry and sapless and went up like a torch. I saw Silvanito retreating from the conflagration, and called to him.

"Did you do that?"

"Yes, señor."

"What ever for?"

"There was a snake up there, pues, with a nest."

"What kind of snake?"

"A tileuate. Big, with a body thick like this, like your wrist, and long of a meter or a meter and a half and black, and they make nests in trees and run after people."

"Why did you set fire to the tree? It wasn't much good, but it made some shade."

"I couldn't reach the nest. And, señor—"

He stopped and plaited his fingers and a deep red came up under his tawny skin.

"Well?"

"The other day, I think it was Tuesday—it is Tuesday that comes after Monday, isn't it?—I took sixteen centavos from the fortune, and fifteen I spent in a pencil at Doña Arcelia's. It pains me much, and I tell you that you may punish me."

"There was a little pause."

"But I have gotten rid of the snake," he said proudly.

"Will the fire have killed it, or will it just have driven it down from the tree?" I asked.

"Who knows?" said Silvanito. "When are you going to castigate me?"

Although there were no further thefts from the fortune, the whole episode had left an unpleasant taste, and what with this and the imminent loss of Candelaria I found myself fretting. The time for her departure finally approached, and daily, alternately smiling and weeping, she cooked longer, more elaborate, and more delicious meals, as if determined to make us miss her. I had interviewed several local girls with a view to replacing her, without finding anyone satisfactory, and I even advertised in Guadalajara, receiving only one reply, from a pert young girl with magenta lips who claimed to have been to a school of cookery in Mexico City, asked three times the normal wages and, judging by the practiced but uncouth play of her buttonlike eyes, would undoubtedly want to make herself at home in parts of the house other than the kitchen. I was getting really worried when, two mornings before Candelaria's proposed departure, as I was sitting on the terrace there came a shuffling, followed by a sigh and a small whining voice. Aurora was standing at my elbow with a bundle of washing and a girl I'd never seen before.

"This is Apolonia, señor," she said. "I met her by chance down the street. She has left a post in Guadalajara, a post in the house of elegant gentry, very exigent. She is a cook."

It was a relief. I talked to the girl, and in the end she promised to come for a few weeks, starting the next day so as to find her way about before Candelaria left.

All morning there were two cooks in the kitchen, and all morning they both talked at once. It was one o'clock when Candelaria discovered that she was behind with lunch, indeed that practically there was no lunch. She burst into tears, and before she had mopped them up with her apron, Apolonia had taken over. She worked very calmly. It turned out that she did everything with the utmost composure, but the lunch though not very late was only tolerable.

The next morning, which was Candelaria's last, she woke me up at six o'clock.

"Señor, señor! Doña Chabela is going to Guadalajara, and she is here, and she wants something to take many eggs in, and she is taking the big tin breadbox."

I told Candelaria to say that I was sorry that we needed the breadbox but that there were a number of cartons at her disposal.

"But how can I?"

"Why not? It's not at all a rude message."

"That no. But she isn't here."

"I thought you said she was."

"Yes, she was. But she's gone."

"Then what about the breadbox?"

"She took it, pues."

I think I just stared at Candelaria, dazed.

"Oh, I've sent Silvanito to catch the bus," she said. "With a carton."

A little later Silvanito came panting, clasping the big breadbox, which he put on my bed. He had easily overtaken the bus, which was having a wheel changed two minutes after starting.

"And Doña Chabela says that she only took the breadbox because it was not eggs but little chicks, and she thought the little holes for air would benefit them on the journey. But we made holes in the carton, with a big thorn."

After that beginning the day continued in a state of excitement. Candelaria was collecting her belongings, which included an old bamboo cage containing a drab brown bird, which on rare occasions sang very sweetly, and a new bamboo cage full of clothes. She was not leaving by bus. She had made an arrangement with a canoa that would be returning from Chapala to take her down the lake to San Pedrito, where the Mexico City highway passes, and where she could pick up a bus for Jiquilpan. She was in a great state as to whether the canoa would arrive or not. She was forever popping up to the roof, and half a dozen times she saw a canoa, but each time it was the wrong one and sailed straight past Ajijie.

"If that Carmen doesn't come with his canoa," she said, "it will all be the fault of Don Braulio, who said Carmen would come and who did not give me at all a good price for my poultry. And I meant to say, Don Braulio's bread has been very bad recently, and I told him he should be ashamed, for even the Señor of the Oven makes a bread less bad."

At last, in the afternoon, the right canoa arrived and put in. It was already carrying a big bed. The frame, strung with thongs, was lodged across the stern, projecting at the sides, and the ends were propped upright in the prow. Tied to the frame were a pair of geese.

All the servants came down to see Candelaria off; so did the Professor, and he made the boatman arrange Candelaria's things three separate times, according to some scientific theory of the disposal of cargo. When it was all done the second boatman arrived with two sacks of charcoal and plumped them in the bows. The Professor sighed.

"Now it's all wrong again," he said, "Oh, dear."

Pushing back his hat, he mopped his brow and gave up.

At last Candelaria herself climbed in, clutching the cage with the songbird, and settled on a narrow thwart below the bed frame and above the geese. There was a pause while one of the boatmen had a long shouted conversation with a fisherman friend two hundred yards away, and then suddenly the canoa cast off. With tears pouring down her face, her arms waving and the bird cage waving too, Candelaria screamed farewells. The geese honked. And very slowly the canoa was poled out. In about five minutes they started to put up the sail, and at one moment it seemed that Candelaria and the bed must have been swept overboard by it. But suddenly she popped up the other side of the sail, still gesticulating. There was a brisk breeze, the sail filled quickly, and the canoa was soon spinning off. As long as I could see her, Candelaria was waving her arms, and the bird cage.

I had decided to keep Apolonia. A recommendation from Aurora wasn't encouraging, but I was in no position to pick and choose. She seemed agreeable—a plain, plump, walnut-colored girl in her early thirties, I judged, and she had a willing smile.

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Health, Habitations and Habits

By Tomme Clark Call

BOTH as cause and effect, the public health status of any nation is a major factor in its economic progress, political stability, and general social advancement. Public-health improvement in Mexico, consequently, is of high concern to that nation's future, aside from obvious humanitarian considerations, as it also is of close interest to neighboring areas of the United States.

Dr. Rafael P. Gamboa, Mexico's Secretary of Public Health, announced early in 1951 that the mortality rate in Mexico has been lowered remarkably in post-war years through sanitary measures and public-health campaigns. He stated that the rate had been reduced to around 15 per cent to a thousand inhabitants yearly during the preceding year, and he estimated that current plans promised a further decrease to 12 or 13 in the near future. President Aleman consequently declared 7 April as 'World Health Day' at a special celebration of that triumph, which is the more notable for the fact that there was virtually no such thing as a pre-Revolutionary national health program.

Deficiencies in Mexico's census and vital-statistics reporting compel caution in accepting that announcement at face value, but the trend indicated is one of a quarter century of unmistakably steady improvement. The indicated postwar decline about equalled that for the preceding fifteen years.

In the early 1940s, Mexico's mortality rate—high even for Latin America—was more than twice that of the United States, and the infant mortality rate was three times as high. In fact, children under one year of age accounted for about a fourth—and children under five, for about a half—of total deaths. It thus can be easily understood what Dr. Gamboa's report meant to the people. Life expectancy in Mexico was lengthened from 36.3 years to only 39 years in 1940, in contrast to the prewar mark of 63.8 years set by the United States. Mexican improvement undoubtedly has been more pronounced during the past ten years.

Unlike the United States, where leading causes of death are heart and cancer, or generally 'old-age,' diseases, Mexico's causes are mainly diarrhea-enteritis and pneumonia, with malaria, violence and accident, and tuberculosis leading a long array of lesser cau-



Water Color.

By Angel Zamarripa.

ses. Obviously, therefore, Mexico's greatest health needs are for improvement in sanitation, pure food and water, better housing and clothing, personal hygiene and public health education, to supplement medical and hospital care. The problems are social and economic, as well as scientific, and are being so attacked. The greatest promise for early improvement no doubt lies in the field of preventive medicine.

The Secretaria de Salubridad y Asistencia (Ministry of Health and Welfare) has charge of the national program, working through state and local agencies. That ministry's budget had increased from 108.7 million pesos in 1946 to nearly 130 millions in 1950. In order to meet the international standard of a dollar per inhabitant, however, the agency should have almost a quarter-billion pesos, or nearly twice the recent outlay.

Furthermore, the Mexican national public-health program faces obstacles difficult for North Americans to appreciate. The variations in terrain and climate—with equally variant health problems—are great and abrupt. Population density ranges from more than 3000 per square mile in the Federal District to one in Quintana Roo, with expanding communications only lately winning over tremendous natural barriers. General education, though advancing markedly in recent years, is far from being the public-health force it is in the United States. Finally, Indian custom and superstitions, which amount to witchcraft in the more backward areas, and medieval religious beliefs distorted by primitive prejudices are a frustrating drag on public-health improvement, as is illiteracy. The Mexican milieu breeds a stubborn fatalism that confronts safety and health educators at every turn.

The 1940 census found only one physician for every 948 inhabitants in urban areas; and one for every 18,435 in rural regions. In other words, 7272

of Mexico's 7964 physicians were in urban areas, as were 1669 of its 1760 dentists. Those figures—with subsequent improvement no doubt largely offset by population growth—reflect not only a national shortage of physicians but also a grave maldistribution of existing practitioners. Even so, a 1945 law banned foreign practitioners, with strict exceptions.

* * *

A promising program was begun by Mexican medical schools in 1936, to send public-salaried graduate students for a half year's pre-degree, feeless practice in rural communities. A number remain in such places after contributing to rural health improvement and reporting on their special rural research. Those student-practitioners train nurses, distribute government medicine, improvise clinics, and write theses to contribute to knowledge of rural medicine. But midwives still deliver most rural babies, often under appalling conditions, and many villages and ejidos never see a physician.

The Department of Education maintains an advanced school in rural medicine, and the Department of Public Health conducts a co-operative medical-care program among the minority of ejidos able to bear a part of financial responsibility. A federal regional and local hospital building program has been under way for several years, with bright new clinics and hospitals, an encouraging sight on the Mexican scene. In September 1951 President Aleman announced that a dozen new major hospitals, clinics, and health centers were under construction. Mexican participation in the Inter-American Hospital Association has helped to raise standards in this field. Clinics, hospitals, maternity and child welfare centers also are part of the more progressive plants developing under the industrialization program. Training of governmental public-health and social-welfare personnel, a deficiency as serious as the physician and nurse shortages, is receiving increasing attention. Vaccination and inoculation programs are spreading slowly into the rural areas.

A promising experiment is a mobile medical unit added to the Department of Education's Cultural Missions Fleet, the modern equivalent of the earlier educational missionaries who went into the backward areas teaching health, agriculture, arts, and crafts along with reading and writing. The unit has X-ray equipment and clinical instruments, as well as health demonstration material for visual education. Rural field units also go to ejidos and Indian villages, carrying vaccination and the public-health education program. Special Health Ministry offices, such as the Campaign Office against Malaria and the Campaign office against Venereal Disease (with a task of great magnitude), have attacked key health problems with spirited drives.

Outside aid is greatly needed, especially in technical guidance. Mexico is indebted to the International Health Division of the Rockefeller Foundation, which initiated its work there in 1918 in a fight against yellow fever, and to co-operative special agencies of the United Nations, the Organization of American States. The United States Office of Co-ordinator of Inter-American Affairs rendered valuable wartime assistance. Mexico welcomes international co-operation. It participates in the World Health Organization, and took part, for example, in three international health meetings in 1951. The Malaria Congress that year, which appraised achievements by the National Anti-Malaria Campaign, was assisted by the Pan American Sanitary Bureau, the Office of Inter-American Co-operation, and the Rockefeller Foundation. The Health Ministry was able to declare that malaria is no longer

endemic in Mexico. A similar meeting in 1951 was the First International Oncoercosis Conference, where Latin American and United States specialists attacked the blinding eye disease that has 40,000 victims in Chiapas and 10,000 in Oaxaca.

Private efforts, with and without governmental help, are adding notably to the national campaign. Several examples are indicative. The Polio Relief Committee in Mexico City, organized by various Anglo-American colony societies, is a new agency to combat the rising incidence of poliomyelitis—particularly in the Federal District—with its first major project a physiotherapy unit at the American British Cowdray Hospital. It is sponsoring special classes in polio control, helping to send personnel to the United States for advanced training and otherwise preparing against possible future epidemics. Civic organizations in Mexico City in 1951 were raising funds for a children's clinic and a Boys' Town such as Monterrey already boasts.

Mexico is utilizing all informational media possible in its health program. A 1951 example was the use of a television round-table discussion to dramatize the work that is being done by the private Mexican Association of Action against Leprosy, a disease that affects between 40 and 50 thousand persons in that country. Conventions on smallpox and leprosy were held in Guadalajara in 1951, and a Health Services Co-ordinating Conference for the southeastern states was organized at Tuxtla Gutierrez. Full publicity is given the specialized drives, such as that against tuberculosis.

Mexico also is developing its own drug industry, with a wealth of raw materials available. An outstanding example recently is Syntex, S. A., which is mass-producing hormone materials—such as progesterone, testosterone, and pregnenolone—from jungle resources at greatly reduced cost. However, Mexico in recent years has been the United States' top world customer for medicinals. United States producers are manufacturing more and more of those goods in Mexican plants.

The solving of a number of Mexico's worst health problems must await further economic development, improvement of living standards, and expansion of the taxable national income. The construction of sewage and pure-water supply systems and the overcoming of widespread housing and dietary deficiencies require financial resources not yet available. The extent of the tasks involved are scarcely imaginable to anyone who has not personally observed present conditions. Those conditions—because of the magnitude of the previous neglect, inflation, and diversion of resources to what were, perhaps erroneously, considered more immediate needs—reflect only a gradual improvement during the revolutionary era, with notable urban exceptions.

* * *

Despite land redistribution and, in some cases, farm-income increases, rural Mexicans continue largely to live the same kind of life as their ancestors, in the same jacales or shacks, eating the same unbalanced and inadequate corn-beans-chile diet, drinking the same polluted water, and wearing the same skimpy cotton clothing. Rural Mexico's economic conditions have not improved sufficiently for substantially higher living standards, which could not be achieved immediately anyway because of the barrier of sheer habit. Not only the means but also the wants of the rural Mexicans must be enhanced. Even such simply sensible matters as proper disposal of human and animal excrement and garbage are not tended to in small

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Joaquin Serenades his Aunt

By John W. Hilton

STREET musicians, from Sonora, sprinkle many sketchpads. They offer a never-ending temptation to visiting artists. Nothing seems so typical of the west coast as musicians in the street, be it a large city or a village of two dozen houses in the mountains. My sketches remind me of many things, and bring back countless happy memories, but above all, I am reminded of the time we serenaded the aunt of my friend, Joaquin.

He stopped by, one evening, with a couple of friends—one carrying a guitar and the other a flute. They informed me that this was his aunt's saint's day, and I would be "my simpático" if I were to bring my guitar and help serenade her.

This seemed like a fine idea, so off we went—two guitars and a flute. In a few blocks we came to the cantina, where we stopped and had several "Three Star Hennessys"—to loosen up the vocal cords. They worked to perfection. In a few minutes we were rehearsing—right there in the bar. This drew quite a crowd—and a couple more recruits, including a tenor, and a violinist who had only three strings, but played really well.

Joaquin decided that we had better take a little refreshment along, so we left after a couple more drinks, with a full bottle of "Three Star," just in case the vocal cords should happen to get parched.

According to an old statute on the law books of Alamos, it was necessary to go to the police station and register the fact that we were serenading. This kept us from being arrested for disturbing the peace. The chief of police reminded us that it was legal for us to sing, as much as we wished, since we were out on a "serenata"; but we must refrain from loud talking in the streets.

We passed by Adolfo's place, and someone suggested that we ask him to come along, too, since he was a distinguished musician. Someone else reminded us of the fact that it was a piano he played, and a very heavy grand, at that. (Not much good on a serenade.)

"Bring him along anyway," said Joaquin; "he can sing, at least."

Adolfo came to the door about then, and assured us that singing was one thing that he could not do. "Who ever heard of a Mexican who couldn't sing?" expostulated one of the crowd. "Give him a few drinks—he'll sing. This brandy would make a wooden saint in the Church go on a serenade."

Having acquired Adolfo, who still insisted he couldn't sing—after the third drink, we remembered that we were very close to Louisa's house; and she ought to be serenaded—for the "hell" of it. Louisa was a very pretty girl. We were in the middle of the

first tune, when Alejandro came round the corner of the house—mad as a hatter. He had been “playing bear” at the iron grill of Louisa’s window, and thought that a rival was serenading his sweetheart. Explanations, and a drink, pacified him; so we all serenaded Louisa while we waited for a boy to bring another bottle of brandy. Our troupe had swelled to about a dozen, by now; and we were beginning to get into the feel of the thing.

It was only a few doors down the street to Polo’s house. He was the son of the President—a very good singer and fine fellow. Nothing seemed more natural than to serenade the family of the President, especially, since he too had a good-looking daughter. Explanations were always made at each stop that this was really a serenade for Joaquin’s aunt, and that we were just rehearsing. On the second song, Polo and his father, the President of the district, came out under the portales. They were both beaming, “El presidente” passed cigarettes. Polo found a bottle of tequila. It took little urging to get him to accompany us. He even had an idea:

“Why not get Pablo, the bass fiddler? After all, what is a serenata without a bass?” So, off we trooped to Pablo’s house, stopping several times along the way, to do a number under the window of some friend. Pablo was willing; but his wife reminded him that he had a coffin to finish on the morrow. (He was the same coffin maker, bass viol player, and orchestra leader.) There ensued quite a family row, which was enjoyed by everyone but Pablo. They finally compromised, deciding that Pablo could come outside and have a drink with us and serenade the Palomares sisters, who lived in the same block. After the third drink, when a safe distance had intervened between Pablo and his wife, he again became the dominant male and, asserting his rights, accompanied us for the rest of the night. He knew his wife would not dare to venture out on the streets to catch up with him at that hour.

As the crowd increased, the suggestions as to who should be serenaded, along the way, piled up—until we were doing an average of two per block. It was all good fun, and I had a chance to learn the words to several songs that I wanted; songs mostly of unrequited love, deserted sweethearts, and deeds of bravery: “Borachita Me voy,” “Mi Ranchito,” “Una Mujer Casada,” “La Noche de Amor.” Translated into English, they seem either silly or slightly bawdy, but in Spanish, under a Mexican moon, they were the essence of poetry.

Lights were going out, one by one, in the houses along the streets; but we knew that we had a considerable audience. We were pretty good, if I do say so myself. In spite of the quantity of brandy consumed, there were no drunks in the crowd, and the instruments and voices stayed in tune much better than might be expected.

We had three boys bringing drinks, by then, and someone said it would be fine if we could have some tacos and coffee. Another celebrant reminded first that it was eleven o’clock, and all the restaurants were closed.

“In the next block is the Indian enchiladara called Chavela. She will open up to such a company.”

“Do you know her?” another asked.

“Do I know her? Indeed!” he cried. “Is it not to her that I pay the ten pesos, every month, for my ‘broncho’ by her daughter Margarita? I assure you, compadres, that I know her, and all can be arranged to the utmost satisfaction. Furthermore, we should have to sing for Margarita, sooner or later; since she will find out that I was out this night, and will feel slighted if songs are not played under her window.”

When we came to the house, he pounded on the front door for entry, while we assembled under the window he indicated, and did our best to serenade “La India.” A lamp was lighted, and soon smells of firewood and brewing coffee came out into the street. We played again, inside the house, while Chavela actually made enchiladas at that hour as if nothing were irregular about the matter.

Margarita came smiling into the room, and by her looks, I decided that our friend would soon be paying her mother twenty pesos.

About then, one of the boys who was maintaining our lifeline with the cantina arrived—empty-handed—to announce that there was no more “Three Star Hennessy” to be had, but other brands were still available; also, the bar was closing, but the back door would be unlocked so the boys could continue to supply us if we so wished.

No one seemed to think of what seemed the obvious thing to me, and I certainly was not going to say anything. I am sure that if I had announced that the American way would be to have one boy bring several bottles, instead of a bottle each for several boys, they would have been shocked by my attitude. They could send, now, and purchase the night’s supply, so the bartender could go to sleep; but that would not be the Mexican system—and I was in Mexico. I kept silent. We finally took our leave of the Indian family, all of whom had awakened, one by one, including our friends’ little “broncho.” He greeted them with a great deal of affection, and not a trace of embarrassment. Illegitimacy of this sort, by unmarried boys of “good family,” is thought little of, so long as it is admitted and the father pays something toward the support of the offspring.

“Otherwise,” explained one of my friends, “how can Mexico become a racially unified nation? You don’t expect him to marry the Indian, do you?”

We finally arrived at the home of Joaquin’s aunt—at one-thirty in the morning. We gathered under the window, and started playing softly, her favorite tune, “La Estrellita.”

“This will please her so very much,” sighed Joaquin, “she loves so the music.” “Then we struck up a livelier tune, but still there was no response from the house. Joaquin looked a little puzzled, but we rendered two more numbers before he suddenly stopped us.

“Compadres! A thousand pardons! I am a stupid pig! I have just now remembered that my so dear aunt is quite deaf. She cannot hear a single note, without the aid of the ear trumpet. A little moment of patience, please, while I awaken the servants who will inform her that she is being serenaded.”

The “little moment” stretched into a good many, as they are apt to do in Mexico; but finally, after considerable banging on the front gate, a servant was summoned and the old lady was properly notified of the fact that she was being serenaded. She was moved close to the window with her ear trumpet in place, and at a signal, everyone began again “La Estrellita.”

“Play louder, Compadres,” shouted Joaquin. “Even this will seem very gentle music to her ears.”

Everyone redoubled his efforts. They had lighted a lamp in the aunt’s room, and I could see by her face that she was enjoying the performance. I looked about me in the moon-drenched street at the white-clad, white-hatted singing figures, casting weird shadows on the dull-red paving tiles; and I wondered if people in the United States really knew how much they were missing. Suddenly I saw a thing that startled me. There was Adolfo—with his mouth wide open and head thrown back toward the stars. He was singing at the top of his voice. They boys had been right.

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Water Color.

By Alfred Ybarra.

On the Shores of Lake Patzcuaro

By Fred del Villar

THOSE WHO WANT TO ENJOY timeless and blessed quietude among people as gentle as no other on the face of the earth, in a land where beauty still has emphasis in life and music is never long absent even in squalor, can still find them on the shores of Lake Patzcuaro in Mexico. There the Tarascan Indians, totally unaware of Point Four, artificial prices of silver, or Good Neighbor Policies, accepted us "gringos" as fellow human beings, opening to us their homes and hearts, sharing with us what little they had and asking nothing in return.

Our friends in Mexico City, both U.S. and Mexican, thought we were mad even to think of camping in the midst of a "hostile" Indian people who "abhorred strangers." Despite their repeated warnings, we packed our tent, mattresses, sarapes, pots, pans, and a few clothes, and one morning in February saw us—my wife Mary and me and José Antonio the dog—headed westward on the road to Morelia and Guadajajara.

I shall not try to describe the beauties of Lake Patzcuaro, with its ring of mountains and broad green marshlands: this has been done by many a good guidebook. We chose a campsite on the southern shore under some lemon trees, about fifty yards from the lake. A hundred yards away stood a fisherman's stone cabin with a battered straw roof and another beyond it, more prosperous looking, in a small patch of wheat. Fifteen miles to the east, Patzcuaro, the lake's big city, was dimly visible; Erongaricuaru, a lively small town, lay five miles to the west, hidden in a curve of the lake. Almost a thousand feet up in a fold of the mountain that rose vertically above our tent, the tiny village of Arucutín nestled between us and the sky.

Permission to plant our tent was easily secured when the landlord, Damián Asensio, a tall, handsome young fellow with a ready smile and the perfect man-

ner of all Tarascans, was summoned from the village. We could, he said, stay as long as we liked, and he hoped it would be for a long time. Would he rent us the place? He would not: he did not use the land, it cost him nothing, we owed him nothing. He wished us happiness and should we have any desire that it was in his power to satisfy, we should let him know.

We left our car on the road, where it remained untouched except by the children who scrawled their names on the dusty fenders. We hung our clothes in the open on a rope stretched between two trees. Our other properties we left scattered in and around the tent—typewriters, deckchairs, cooking paraphernalia, suitcases, all of which must have held a certain attraction for people with no more than the meager necessities of life. Only on one occasion were they ever tampered with. We had been away for the day and a storm—extremely rare in that season—had swept over the lake. On returning to the camp that night, we found our clothes and everything else neatly tucked away inside the tent, safe from rain and hail. We learned later that the author of the good deed was Pedro, the local drunk and our nearest and poorest neighbor.

For protection we had, it is true, old José Antonio, who understood from the beginning that it was his duty to look fierce, bark, and chase other dogs away. Very soon, however, José Antonio awoke to the fact that most of the neighbors' dogs were girl-dogs, and from then on he gave huge parties around our tent, to which we unwillingly contributed whatever food we had failed to hang high on the trees.

Getting settled did not take long. We built a campfire outside the tent, with four flat stones and a grate, and there was a well a couple of hundred yards away. We bought most of our food, as well as wood and charcoal, in Erongaricuaru: meat from Don Juan Ruiz, who also had the best horses in town and always

kept two saddled for us; groceries at the "Almacén la Sirena" whose owner, Don José Romero, once cashed my check for one hundred dollars on a U.S. bank with no idea of who I was or whether my credit was good. Our bacon, coffee, fruit, and other delicacies came from Pátzcuaro, where we drove every Friday—market day—taking with us as many villagers as we could, piling our coupe high with children and baskets of produce until we looked like a roving advertisement for a popular make of car.

Wild ducks and the famous whitefish of the lake we bought from the more prosperous of our neighbors, Juan Gabriel, a good-looking, hard-working young man whose plump and pretty wife provided us with our daily tortillas. We used Juan's canoes freely to go paddling and swimming in the lake. Maneuvering a dugout canoe is no simple task, and any amount of experience acquired with conventional canoes is of little avail. Regardless of size—they range from one-man skiffs to huge family barges carrying up to a dozen people and even burros and cattle—dugout canoes are heavy, clumsy, and precariously balanced. The first time my wife and I went out in one, we proceeded in circles until at last we learned just the right twist for the paddle. Juan often came with us and did the paddling, however, sometimes carrying his spears and spear-thrower, the *atlatl*, for some duck-hunting.

He would paddle to a short distance from one of the large, dark patches of ducks on the lake, then start a tremendous racket, shouting and banging his paddle on the side of the canoe. When we asked for an explanation, he very seriously explained that the noise "paralyzes the ducks with fear" so they are unable to fly away. Unbelievable as it sounds, this strategy seems to work, and while most of the ducks do fly away, a few always remain. When Juan was close enough, he took careful aim and threw the first of his three spears. If he missed and the duck disappeared under water, he was ready with the second spear when it emerged again. The third spear was seldom needed.

We in turn described duck hunting in Maine, the long, cold hours crouching behind a blind... the decoys... Ready as Juan was to believe the incredible, the decoys proved a little too much even for him and he shouted with laughter while Mary and I stared at each other, feeling very silly indeed.

We grew very fond of Juan, and there was hardly anything he would not do for us, as we learned much to our chagrin. Early each morning, a little red bird suddenly emerged from a sky often as crimson as himself to fly about near the opening of our tent, singing as if to wish us a happy day. He invariably followed by two little canary-yellow friends, and the three performed for us, to the accompaniment of their voices, the most intricate, ballet-like pirouettes, in and out and around the bushes. It was the signal for us to get up. The three birds stayed around until sunset, when they retired to the tree where they made their home. We had often pointed out the little red fellow to Juan and mentioned how much we liked him. One day when we went for the canoe to go out on the lake, Juan was waiting for us, a big grin on his handsome face. With the embarrassed expression of one who does not want to be thanked or praised he pulled a little red bird out of his overalls pocket: a spot of darker red showed on the plump crimson breast where the pebble from Juan's slingshot had hit it.

We could not stay angry. The whole episode and its grim anti-climax simply made us realize the small value which the Indian, with a history dripping with blood and grief, sets upon life, whether animal or human, his own as well as others.

Another example of this attitude came during the three-day bullfights that climaxed the Mardi Gras fiestas at Arucutín. In these tourneys the animals were

not killed, but the men might well have been. Sixty or seventy bulls and steers were brought to the village from all over the lake region to take part in the *fiesta brava*. From the corral they were let loose one by one into the bull ring—fenced by a stone wall on which we sat well within reach of the beasts' long horns—where men on horseback and on foot lassoed them and passed a rope around their middle. A bespurred youth would then volunteer to ride the bull, while others "fought" him with their sarapes, getting between the animal's horns, often being trampled by his hoofs, until the rider was thrown off and the bull was roped again and returned to the corral. Some of the animals were really ferocious, yet neither glory nor money awaited the youngsters who rode them. My prudent attitude and refusal to step into the ring to ride one of the bulls probably did nothing to strengthen my prestige. When, confronted with a particularly vicious-looking specimen, I explained that I was too old for that kind of thing, a chorus of laughing voices protested: "But the bull is old too!"

One of those who very nearly came to serious grief under a bull's hoofs was our landlord *Damián*, who as the result of a mishap had to hobble about with a cane for several days. *Damián* was one of our most frequent visitors, coming down from the village every morning with a calf, which he tethered at the lake's edge to fatten on the green fodder. He would usually catch us breakfasting and join us under the lemon trees for coffee and talk.

Many people, friends and strangers alike, often from villages several miles away, sat around our fire. Some came to pay a neighborly visit or bring us a jug of pulque, others to discuss their problems and grievances. The question of whether and how to come to El Norte seemed to be foremost in many of our visitors' minds. We had a car, some day we would be heading back to the United States: could they come with us? It was that simple. The idea of immigration officers did not bother them in the least, nor did the prospect of finding themselves in a strange land, illegally and without papers. Actually, all they seemed to want was a lift to the border. Crossing it apparently presented no difficulty. Upon our steady refusal to be accessories to their migratory ambitions, they requested our advice on the respective pros and cons of coming to the U.S.A. as contract laborers or entering "de contrabando." The latter of course had to consider the bus fare to the border (fifty pesos) and the barge fare across the Rio Grande (four pesos)...

Thus we learned of entire families who, unimpaired by visas or passports, had come to the United States simply by paying half a dollar to a man running a regular if illegal service between the two countries. From the border, we were told, some of the immigrants had ventured farther north and subsequently disappeared, some were making a precarious living in Texas, many others were back in Mexico.

Our greatest friend in Arucutín was the village mayor, Don Salud Asensio, a short, wiry, and extremely wise Indian of forty-odd years, with a small mustache and a huge cowboy hat. He too had his problem. The first he brought to us was of a personal nature. During the war, while Salud worked in the tomato harvest in Colorado, he had sent his wife in Pátzcuaro a money order for a hundred dollars. In the meantime, his wife had moved, the money never reached her, and Salud, after a wild goose chase from one post office to the other for several years, had almost given up hope of recovering the money. Could we do something about it? We simply sent the receipt for the money order to a friend in Washington, asking him to look up the matter at the Post Office Department, and Salud got his money. Probably nothing

enhanced our position in Arucutín more than the recovery of the mayor's giro.

Be that as it may, we soon became Don Salud's confidants and advisers. His one wish seemed to be that we build a home and put down roots in Arucutín. The fact that we were in Mexico on a six-month tourist permit was of no consequence; as long as he was mayor—he assured us—we were "from" Arucutín. "You are no more Yankee than the Aztec eagle on the Mexican flag," he told us.

One day, walking about the village in what Salud had decided was a home-hunting expedition, we crossed the basketball field. From this spur of the mountain, advancing a thousand feet above the lake, the view of Janitzio and the other islands, of Quiroga and the highway to Guadalajara on the opposite shore, was breathtaking. I could not help saying that this would be the ideal spot for a home. "Then I will expropriate it for you," Don Salud exclaimed with a grand gesture of his hand. Whether he could do so or not, he meant it.

As our friendship grew closer, we discussed issues of greater magnitude and public interest: Mexico's eternal problems, the water supply, education.

Arucutín, on the shores of one of Mexico's largest lakes, had no water. It was heartbreaking to watch the village women, old and young alike, barefoot and clad in the heavy clothes and innumerable underskirts imposed by custom and tradition, toil up and down the steep, mile-long, dusty path from lake to village, lugging heavy jugs of water. Two meetings of the village elders, in which we took part, were called at Don Salud's house. Around a table loaded with pulque and chicken, beneath saddles hanging from the rafters of the cool, bare room, we discussed the situation.

Don Salud's other major problem—although he had it well in hand—was the school. What worried him was the growing number of already scarce teachers in the district who left their jobs to work as braceros in the United States, where they could make more than by teaching the three R's to young Indians. "His" school, however, had a teacher—a young Tarascan woman who, the first time we visited the school, was teaching a Tarascan song to three dozen boys and girls of from six to sixteen years.

* * *

All over Mexico, children in rural communities are taught first their native Indian tongue, afterwards Spanish. All elementary text books are bilingual. Be-

cause of this enlightened policy, any antagonism that may have existed between the Tarascan and the outside world—of which our friends in Mexico City seemed to be so keenly aware—is fast disappearing, replaced among the younger generation by the conviction that it is their Tarascan blood that makes them Mexicans.

"Mexico is the fatherland of all Tarascans. We Tarascans are brothers of everyone born in Mexico," reads the primer in use in Michoacán schools; and the following line adds: "We Tarascans are brothers of everyone in the world."

By the way, while the young people frankly called us "gringos," the old Indians on the lake insisted on referring to us as "los españoles," as if we were the rear guard of, or a leftover from, Cortés' party. (The Tarascans, who beat off all Aztec attempts to dominate them, accepted the Spaniards without resistance.)

Actually, the accomplishments of the rural school system go far deeper. Superficially, the bus running twice daily between Pátzcuaro and Erongaricuaró, the blue jeans that almost everywhere are replacing the Indian's traditional white cotton pants, and the omnipresent aspirin tablet, panacea for all kinds of ailments, seem to be the only major changes that have taken place in centuries. Tarascans today are born and die on the sleeping mat of their ancestors; the corn for their tortillas is ground on the same metate, and the food is prepared and cooked in the old, old way. Still the young ones are deeply conscious of the metamorphosis their country is undergoing. With great pride Don Salud and Damián and Juan and many others pointed out that today they own the same land that not so very long ago, under "Don Porfirio" (President Porfirio Díaz) their parents and grandparents had worked in serfdom, if not in outright slavery.

Although we discussed our problems with our Tarascan friends as freely as they discussed theirs, they never tried to pry into our affairs. Our way of life, our ideas and religion were our own, and, they must have felt, as respectable as theirs. Apart from the normal amenities of social intercourse among neighbors, our tent was our castle. Even my wife's jeans and shorts failed to elicit comment, and when she decided to share the masculine prerogative by swimming in the lake in a scanty bathing suit, the faint smile of both men and women was more of admiration for her courage than of disapproval.

As a matter of fact, our typewriters were the
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Two Lives

By Edward Stevens

BECAUSE to her he could not be

The world she was to him,

He made himself the dust that she

Might trample at her whim.

But she, as if to disallow

A balance so unjust,

Contrived to right the scales, and now

The world to him is dust.

Patterns of an Old City

THE PILLOW

By Howard S. Phillips

SHE supposed that the people across the hall had gone out for the evening, because the servant-girl, as she often did when she was left by herself, had the radio going full blast, howling her head off in accompaniment. The noise reverberated through the thin walls, crowding out the other less obtrusive noises that came from the street or the other sections of the building. For the apartment house, built mostly of glass and flimsy partitions, like a sound-board seemed to attract and transmit noise rather than repel it.

That is her way, she thought, of defending herself from loneliness, indeed of actually enjoying it. She is singing with the radio, making a noise, having a great time, because for a little while she is free and unrestrained—she is boss of the premises. She wondered, as she had on other similar occasions, if it would be right to ring the doorbell and ask the girl to reduce the noise a little, and whether she could make herself understood with her few broken words of Spanish, and then gave up the thought in indecision, in uncertainty as to whether the noise was more oppressive than silence.

She sat in the light of a floor-lamp near the glass-panelled wall facing the street, shielded by the properly slanted slats of venetian blinds, an open book resting on her lap. She sat like this every night, after putting Lee to bed, striving to set her mind on the book, seeking to achieve detachment, to achieve immersion in things that did not concern herself; striving to remember that the most important thing of all was to learn how to forget, to learn how to erase the lost and irredeemable yesterdays and to begin each new day if it were a pristine beginning, as if it were not a continuation of the foregone day, as if it were indeed the beginning of being.

She picked up the book, trying to recover the thread of what she had been reading, saying to herself that it was an interesting and enjoyable book and that the awareness of noise was only a state of mind, which like any other awareness could be curbed and obliterated through power of will; but her eyes wandered from the printed lines to the dark and narrow street she could behold covertly through the slanted blinds, to the windows in the buildings across the way and the silhouettes of people passing along the sidewalk.

It is good being here, she said to herself. It is just the place I need. It is just the kind of place Doctor Gollub prescribed. A strange place—a totally strange place where everything will seem completely new and different, and where I myself will presently become different and new.

I wonder, she thought again, if I should not really ask her to do something about the noise. Or is it truly very bad? It does not seem to disturb Lee. She is sound asleep. Playing in the park all afternoon is good for her. Makes her hungry and sleepy. She is doing fine. She is happy here. She has forgotten whatever she might have known or understood. Life with her is neither the past or the future—it is now. And that is what I must learn myself. I must let her guide me, Doctor Gollub said. I must share her life entirely and in that way she will teach me that to keep alive, to learn anew how to bear it, how to enjoy it, I must live in the present. I must accept each moment as a desirable experience, as a discovery of something I had never seen or felt or known before. I have Lee, and having her can still be alive.

Like a child eagerly trying to remember a classroom lesson she sought to remember the Doctor's detailed reiterated instructions, to eternally retain in her mind the wise, soft-spoken words of the man whose daily task was to clear human minds and souls of wreckage, to extricate thwarted beings from emotional labyrinths and to point the way out. Like an absolute sustaining message the voice of Doctor Gollub continually resounded in her thoughts. And that too, she knew was wrong. For as long as she was conscious of these vital admonitions she was also conscious of their cause, of the conditions they sought to allay—as long as one took medicine one was aware of one's illness. The idea was to achieve complete detachment, the state of unawareness of everything save the small and immediate exigencies of life.

But here too, she knew, there was always the peril of excess, like that of too much drug or drink, the danger of going too far, of going beyond complete detachment into the final refuge of total oblivion, of achieving an escape from reality in a chimera, in a wakeful dream, in arriving, after the final door of comprehension or reason was shut, at the abyss of full unawareness—of achieving a flight from reality by falling into a nameless void.

She would come out all right, Doctor Gollub had assured her, because she thoroughly understood her situation, and this understanding would presently enable her to accept it as a normal course of existence and not as a tragic penalty for a sin she had never committed. That, she thought, is the important thing. To face it squarely, without fear or confusion and fight it out. To go away for a while, he said, to be in Mexico, does not mean running away or hiding. It means withdrawing for a while, moving away from it a little, so as to see the whole thing at a clearer perspective. And that, I suppose, is what I am doing. Yes, it is good to be in Mexico, to live in this funny little apartment, to keep house for Lee and myself on sign language, to watch her play in the park or just to sit here at night and hear the noise and look at the empty street. You are here and you make the best of it. You have gone far away from Bridgeport; but it is yet not sufficiently far. But then, I suppose, there is no place that is far enough. It is a place I will have to create, even if I go back to Bridgeport.

I used to think Bridgeport was perfect. I even think I loved it, because Don loved it, because he loved his job and the people he worked with—because at thirty-two he was earning eight thousand a year as an industrial engineer in one of the biggest plants in the city, with a splendid future ahead of him.

The music in the apartment across the hall came to a halt and was supplanted by the booming cajoling talk of the announcer, as resonant and persuasive as if he stood facing her in the room, as if he were talking to her, pointing his finger, and suddenly the string of alien words seemed to become comprehensible. They seemed to echo the words that had been passing through her mind; they seemed to be repeating, "With a future, a splendid, splendid, splendid future ahead of him." And as these words insistently, clamorously resounded in her ears her thoughts became deleted in a sole devastating knowledge, became erased in a mute desolation, in a soundless tearless weeping.

* * *

Lee was eighteen months old when he had to go
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A Story of Deep-Sea Fishing

By Stewart J. Walpole

FORSOOTH this is intended to be an unvarnished tale of a fishing trip, but if I divert from the strictly piscatorial theme, please be patient, because some sidelights are necessary to illuminate the story.

As I have just said, this was a "trip," and you know that to trip means to stumble or make a false step, hence, figuratively, to err, go wrong, be guilty of an inconsistency or inaccuracy. Viewed retrospectively, this angling adventure was indeed in the figurative sense and the retrospection began so quickly that I really think it was reflection of the event while current, rather than in the past.

Past, present and future are sometimes most difficult to define. For instance, the weather on the Gulf of Mexico in the tropics is often at once all three tenses, whether regarded retrospectively or reflectively. To illustrate. At your left, not far distant, is a threatening dark mass of clouds, overhead the sun shines brilliantly, and on your right, close by, a very wet shower is falling from a clear sky. Now you see what I mean!

What or where is Merida is a fair question. For the sake of brevity I will avoid saying any more than that Merida is the capital of Yucatan. Even though the temptation to extol the city and its many attractions is strong, especially because I count among my best friends a score of regular "he" fellows who live there, the kind who love a class bird dog and enjoy all the pastimes of outdoor sportsmen on land and water.

* * *

It was with three of such friends that I made this eventful trip—namely, Sanchez, Mundito and Agustin. It is said of Sanchez, by those who know him best, that whatever other sporting functions he may engage in, you are surest to find him somewhere training a bird dog or breaking a horse, and usually he is doing it for a friend, without thought of any reward other than the personal satisfaction he gets

by adding to his knowledge of dogs and horses. Naturally he exults in his mastery over them, because they love him even while he subjects them to his will, and he has placed so many Yucatecan sportsmen under obligation to him that he is quite the leader in all that pertains to sports in that tropical corner.

Mundito is the colloquial of Raimundo, and our other hero, Agustin, is his brother, both being nephews of Sanchez. All three are owners and operators of large henequen (hemp) plantations, which to my mind are the abiding places of more Bob Whites than any cotton or corn fields I have ever had the good fortune to find in our own blessed United States.

The reason this tale is adorned with remarks apropos of dogs and shooting is because fishing expeditions such as ours are combined with shooting. When one is tired of catching sharks, tarpons or barracuda, he just goes ashore and can very soon be busy shooting doves, quail, plover and, with little more effort, can find turkeys and pheasants, which are almost as large as turkeys and very good eating.

Well, when this fishing trip was first proposed by Sanchez I should have suspected trouble, because he remarked that Mundito had sent instructions to somewhere to put the launch in order, and my previous experience with marine engines has taught me that they are often hard to start and not altogether dependable.

"Friend," said I to Agustin, who is one of the quiet sort, having a little mannerism of eyeing you speculatively, like a somewhat severe aunt, "just where do we go to fish?"

"To the banks near Yalkabul."

Not quite getting the connection between banks and fishing, I said, "Como?" which in Spanish means how, but might better be compared with the American slang, "How come?"

Agustin smiled knowingly and answered: "Our favorite place for big ones is the fishing banks near Yalkabul lighthouse, which is about eighty kilometers down the coast from Dzilam."

"And where might Dzilam be?"

"Oh, that is a puerto eighty kilometros, mas o menos, from here."

The phrase mas o menos is a great favorite in Yucatan. Its interpretation is "more or less," and it applies to appointments in a way that eight o'clock may mean seven or nine; to distance, that eighty can be seventy or ninety, and I have learned that under the soft tropical skies of Latin America one is not to expect too great a degree of preciseness. You ask, "Will it rain?" and the response is "mas o menos." "How old is the child?" "So many years, mas o menos."

* * *

I made a rapid calculation, without the aid of a pencil, and transformed the one hundred and sixty kilometros into one hundred miles, and a further speculative deduction, taking into consideration a journey on a narrow-gauge railway, a flight behind a mule drawing a diminutive car and the uncertainty of weather conditions in a twenty-foot gasoline launch, and concluded that the fishing banks were the equivalent in time and labor to two hundred and fifty miles from where I stood.

However, I was in the hands of friends and they did not seem to take the matter seriously, so why should I?

The first bump came with the news that the initial part of the trip required getting up before dawn in order to catch the five o'clock train. This business of breaking into the best part of my sleeping period never does appeal to me, but I tried to look happy and managed to say, "fine." It sounded rather weak, so I said it again with greater determination, "FINE!"

Next morning Sanchez was waiting for me with a car which was loaded to the guards with bundles, bales, suitcases, guns, etc. His happy smile and greeting of buenos dias, followed by a formal inquiry as to the state of my health and whether my repose has been complete if not, why not?—made me instantly forget the lost hours of sleep. Then we ceremoniously shook hands, as is the custom in Yucatan every time you meet a friend, even if you had parted from him only a few moments before. This practice of shaking hands is a revered institution down there, so take my advice and don't overlook it if you visit Latin America.

I crowded in and wished for my overcoat. One of the errors about the semi-tropics is the thought that there it is warm all the time. Such is not the case in Yucatan between sundown and sunup. I remember more than one sleepless night due to having only a blanket for covering, and on the occasion of a quail hunt it was so cold during the wee hours that one of our party got up and put on all his clothes, then called his dog and coaxed her into his hammock with him for warmth.

At the railway station we met Mundito and Agustin. They had a lot of baggage, too. By this time I had recovered my composure and rather enjoyed the excitement incident to choosing from an army of cargadores, as the red caps are known, the crew required to transport our fishing equipment to the train.

* * *

These Yucatan narrow-gauge railway trains are drawn by small wood-burning locomotives on thirty-pound tracks, and, believe me, they travel some considering the frailty of the roadbed. We traversed the seventy miles in less than three hours, including frequent stops at way stations. On arrival at Temax we

organized to get our luggage off. Two of us passed the innumerable pieces out of windows and two quickly put them down outside. The result was a small mountain in the middle of an adjoining track. It would happen that another train came backing down on our fixings and we had to scramble to clear the way.

In the offing stood a 1930-model mule and close by a pocket-edition "street car." This had four benches, each large enough for two persons. The conveyance runs on an eighteen-inch-wide track which is elevated about a foot on a stone causeway. My friends, Mundito and Agustin, own this transportation system, which is mostly single track and used primarily to haul supplies to their plantations, Chucmichen and San Antonio, and to bring out the henequen. It reaches from the railway station where we stood in the bright, warm sunshine to Puerto Dzilam, a distance of about twelve miles.

Somehow we got all our belongings aboard and found places to put our feet. Thus everything was jake, so I ventured to put the question which I had in mind for quite some time.

"Sanchez," said I, "how about some refreshment?" This not being dog talk, didn't register, so I tried again in Spanish—"Cuando comemos?" Or, as we say at home, "When do we eat?"

"Ah si, si!" And away he went to the little station building.

Presently I had in my hands a pancake with a gob on it that looked like what the cat brought home.

"What is it?" I asked, beginning to be sorry that I had suggested eating. He told me, and I knew exactly as much as before. Not wishing to seem ungrateful, I closed my eyes and took a bite. Glory be! The mystery was good old barnyard chicken, so thoroughly disguised in appearance with the treatment it had received that its own mother would not have known it. I afterwards found that many strange looking things offered me were like the proverbial singed cat, that is, they tasted better than they looked. (Could hardly have been as bad as it appeared!)

* * *

At last we arrived at Dzilam and there was the launch high and dry on the shore of the Gulf of Mexico. It was surrounded by men and boys and a mechanic-appearing chap was looking kind of sorrowful. Mundito was surprised, because he had given orders four days before our arrival to have the craft ready, and upon inquiry he found nothing had been started until that morning. The mechanic said he thought the magneto needed timing and proceeded to separate that complicated piece of machinery. When Sanchez and I got back from a shore bird shooting expedition about four hours later we found the magneto nearly assembled again and the mechanic looking almost cheerful.

Notwithstanding the lashing of the waves and the darkening sky, I assumed an unconcerned air and inquired what might be the prospect of going somewhere soon.

"Well," said Mundito, "it looks a bit rough. Do you want to start now?"

"Why not, skipper?"

"You see the porpoises jumping out there? That means choppy weather."

"Oh, that won't bother us once we get away from shore."

My bravado seemed to go over all too well, so I hedged a little.

"Señor," said I, very polite like, "if it seems very rough for you we can wait a while."

Evidently they had been expecting me to back

out of the expedition and were surprised at my lack of reverence for a possible Gulf squall.

"No big wind," said Mundito.

"Only a breeze," echoed Agustin.

"Looks bad to me," chimed in Sanchez.

I rather favored the minority, but being unable to think of anything except eats, I just pointed to the storm petrels hovering over the waves and thought of how much my friends at home would miss me after this fatal fishing trip. The little wife was no doubt roaming the safe woodlands gathering hepaticas, and I old enough to know better, tempting fate I had promised her faithfully not to take chances. My low spirits were possibly partly due to it being past tea time. I am always braver after I eat.

Following lunch and a lively conference, it was decided to have a squint at the carburetor. Along about three o'clock the consensus favored taking the entire engine out of the boat and holding a postmortem over same elsewhere. Hundreds of bolts were removed and by sundown all the working parts had been cleaned and the electric juice was delivering sparks when and where wanted. At last the engine was back in place and everything about it seemed to be working right.

The next trouble was with the gasoline tank. It had rusted out and would not hold the fuel. Furthermore, the location of it suggested that the ship's architect had built the boat around it, so it was necessary to remove sundry braces and small rafters in order to replace the tank. Well, to avoid making a long story longer, the ship was eventually riding at anchor and the word to come aboard was given shortly before midnight. The cargo of supplies left scarcely room for the pilot, but somehow my three companions, two mozos (Maya servants), and the writer got on.

A little breeze made long swells as we headed out to sea in stygian darkness. The few feeble lights of Dzilam Puerto blinked for a while and soon could not be seen. An occasional wave sprayed over the gunwales and the white caps seemed to get higher as we chugged, it appeared to me, altogether too far from shore.

All of us, except the pilot, tried to sleep, but the launch was by this time dipping into waves which threw our craft perilously from side to side. The wind was now, so to speak, rather brisk. In fact, it was getting so noisy that one had to shout to be heard a foot away.

* * *

"Kenic tzotz kotoc chayana?" bellowed the pilot, which, due to the gyrations of the boat, I immediately understood to mean, "the engine has stopped."

A survey of the motor failed to disclose anything wrong with it. Of course, the conversation of mixed Maya and Spanish was all lost to me, but nevertheless here was where my previous experience with marine engines came in handy.

I screamed in Agustin's ear, "How about gas?" Sure enough, the small temporary tank was empty. We had plenty in reserve, but it was some job to climb out on the front of that bobbing, throbbing, restless little ship and pour five gallons of gasoline into a small funnel.

The engine started willingly and the tension was past. Feline and Amado, the Maya mozos, laughed heartily, although they were soaked and exposed to the cold wind. All the time Sanchez was strangely silent. Huddled in a blanket, his head was hung over the side of the boat. Then I realized that he was seasick, and presently he gave evidence of his distress in unmistakable convulsive heavings and moans.

"Uncle," said Mundito, "can I do anything for you?"

"Yes, shoot me."

At that I think he hit on the surest way of shortening the baneful disturbance of his inwards. At least, none of the forty-nine varieties of cures I have at various times suggested to comrades in distress has helped anybody. In fact, some have been made a little bit worse for following my advice. I shall never forget the fellow who took castor oil on my prescription.

Now that we were actually at sea I found myself wondering if it was really prudent to be there and by the way of comforting myself I looked for Agustin, to say that it seemed a bit breezy and that sort of thing. In the dim light of a solitary lantern I located him lying in a puddle of water with nothing on but B. V. D.'s and apparently sleeping. A fine big splash just then partly awakened him and I said:

"Agustin, ain't you a little on the bright side in that light suit you are wearing?"

"Señor," said he, "this is no place for giddy sailing togs. It's a long swim to shore and I don't wish to be hampered with much clothing."

Not being a strong swimmer, this line of conversation neither cheered nor warmed me, so I drew my wet blanket closer and tried to remember whether we were in the bailiwick of sharks—or, as they call them along the Florida resort coast, extraordinary large trout which never molest anybody.

The wind got stiffer every moment and whitecapped billows rose to starting heights. I could hear the pump being worked by the mozos. Wave after wave whacked and bounced us so that when we dipped head into a trough the propeller raced madly.

But what is the use? I am not at my best when describing things. A report sent home about one of my school day efforts in the writing line said, "He hasn't much ability, but he tries hard."

Anyway, days and weeks seemed to pass before I saw the gleam of an intermittent light and surmised we were within a few miles of Yalkabul lighthouse. Next, I heard the roar of breakers and, by and by, could make out on our starboard where they, the breakers, rolled over what I figured was a coral reef about a half-mile from the shore line.

* * *

The boat was pitching higher than ever along a course parallel with the roar. How our pilot ever managed to tell where to attempt to cross, will ever remain a mystery, but presently he turned the launch head into the breakers and "gave her the gun." Over we went on the champion wave of them all and landed in, as it were, comparatively quiet water. From here to a place, say one hundred yards out from the lighthouse, was easy going and there we dropped anchor.

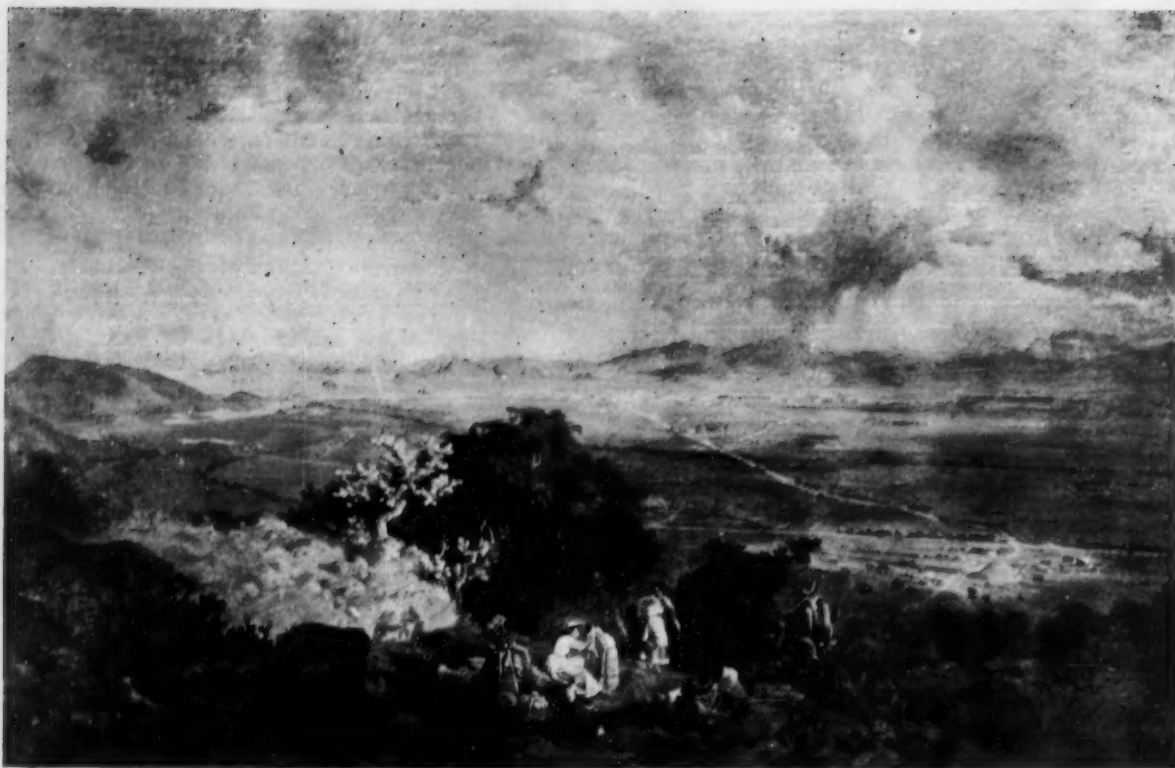
"Sanchez," I yelled, "here we are at Yalkabul."

I couldn't make out his response, but Mundito told me that Uncle had said a bad word.

Two welcome lanterns gleamed on the beach. We couldn't go onto shore with the boat, so Mundito took the lead, jumping overboard and swimming for it. The rest of them followed, except Sanchez and the pilot. I got out of my heavy clothes in a jiffy and soon stood on terra firma. With the launch so lightened, the pilot brought her into shallow water and one of the mozos, waded out and coaxed our off-color comrade to ride his back to shore. This sounds simple, but if you weigh about one hundred pounds just try hoisting one-eighty and walk barefooted across the equivalent of sharp stones and shells carrying such a load.

The two keepers of the lighthouse were holding

Continued on page 48



VALLEY OF MEXICO. OIL.

By José María Velasco.

19th. Century Mexican Art

By Guillermo Rivas

ALTHOUGH the present era in art has been chiefly notable for its rebellious departure from tradition, for a striving among artists to achieve a completely unique and individual expression, there is no such a thing as an entirely new art, nor is there an artist whose work may be classed as *sui generis*. For in its essence all art, even the most radically individualistic, represents an evolution, or at least some element of influence, from recent or remote preceding art. Indeed, even Picasso, the most modern of moderns, has obtained some of his ideas from the Egyptian artists of four thousand years ago.

The sudden and dramatic development in our own time of a powerful art expression in Mexico has led some people to the erroneous notion that Mexico had no art of importance during the preceding era, that the group of gifted and intrepid artists who, evolving a new terminology and aesthetic creed, revived and brought to florescence on public walls in Mexico the forgotten art of mural decoration, had actually created an entirely new art.

And yet, as we view the works assembled in the section of 19th. Century Mexican art at the Bellas Artes Exhibition, we perceive that great paintings were achieved in Mexico long before the modern era, and we also perceive how much the modern era owes to the one which preceded it.

We find in the exhibited examples of 19th. century Mexican art two distinct interpretive tendencies: that which is nourished by popular sources, and that

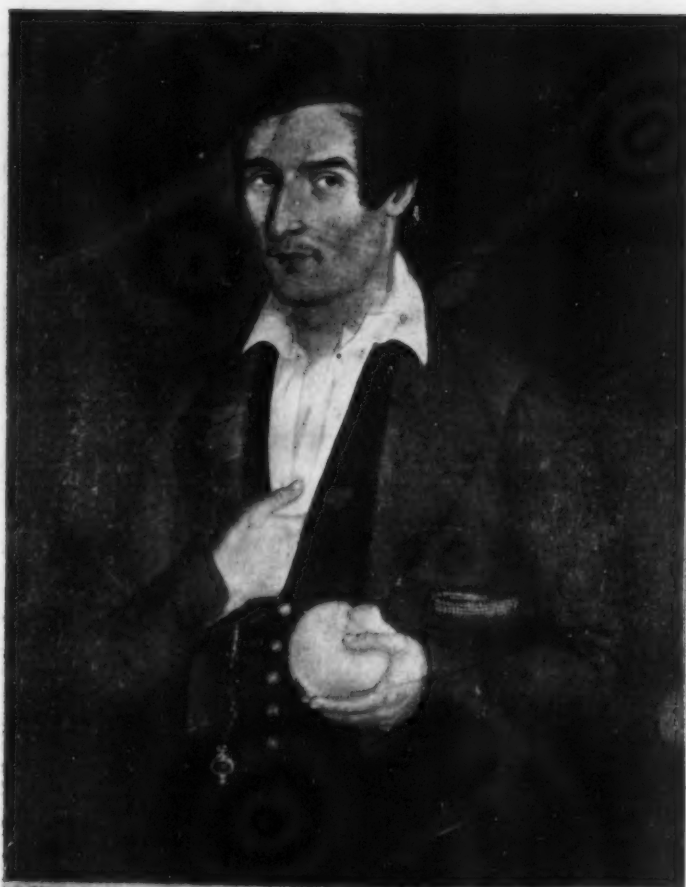
which stems from the academy. Defining the former tendency are the quaint specimens of "retablos," or votive offerings, that were painted by anonymous artists to be hung in churches, and the genre paintings composed in the manner of "retablos" by self-taught and mostly also by anonymous artists. The themes of these unknown artists, often developed with marked personality and excellent craftsmanship, were drawn from real life. Revealing a fine decorative sense and occasional touches of humor, these artists faithfully depicted the customs and sights of their time.

From this anonymous midst of popular artists emerged such eminent portraitists as José María Estrada and Hermenegildo Bustos, and such splendid realistic genre painters as José Agustín Arrieta and José Justo Montiel.

Outstanding among the academic painters of the century were Juan Cordero, Santiago Rebull and José María Velasco. As master portraitists in the classical tradition, Cordero and Rebull were as great as any painter of their time, while the sweeping landscapes of Velasco, designed in terms of veritable grandeur, were likewise unexcelled by any contemporary artist.

Whether classical or popular, these artists have exerted an undeniable influence upon the modern Mexican expression. The popular motives which abound in our present-day mural art were inspired as much by new social concepts as by the 19th. century "costumbristas," while there is hardly a landscape painter in our midst today, from Atl to Nishizawa, who does not owe something to José María Velasco.

Un Poco de Todo



*copia original, de D. J. M. S. G. A. que se sacó, por José M^o E.
el día 25 de Mayo de 1846 en la Academia de San Carlos.*

PORTRAIT. OIL.

By José Maria Estrada.



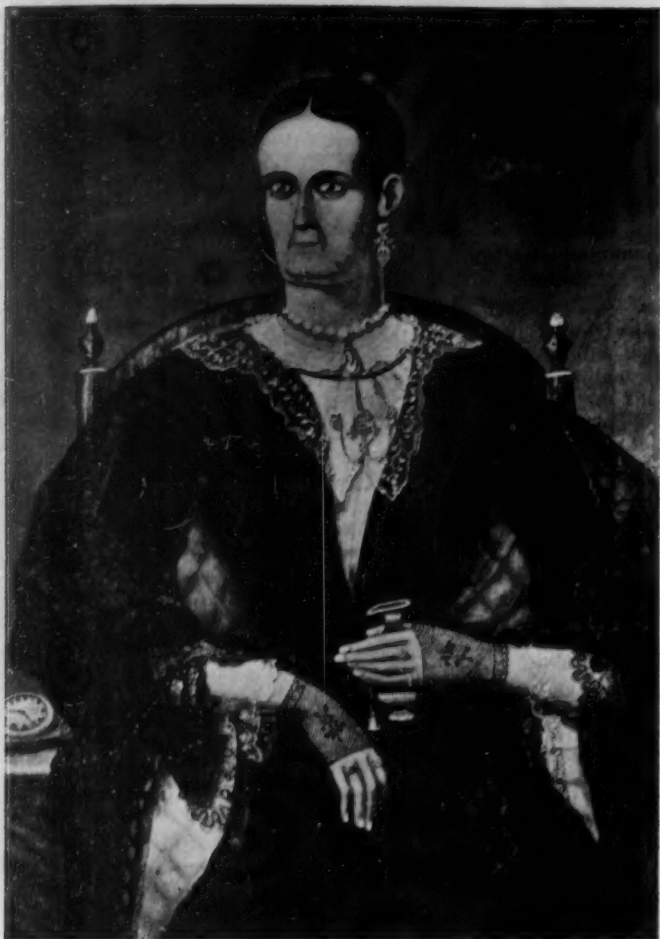
PORTRAIT. OIL.

By Folegrí Clavó.

MARHAL BAZAINE'S TROOPS ABANDON MEXICO. OIL.

By Fabián L. Cuenca.





PORTRAIT. Oil. Anonymous.



PORTRAIT. Oil,

By José María Estrada.

THIS IS THE LIFE. Oil. A satire on current mores. Anonymous.



Un Poco de Todo

CENTRAL AMERICA TACKLES UNIFICATION

CENTRAL America appears on the map as an insignificant, multicolored spot in the isthmus which unites the enormous masses of Mexico with South America. Each of the five little republics of the isthmus, however—Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and El Salvador—is as large, perhaps, as Belgium or half of France. Some 10,000,000 inhabitants—the majority Indians or mixed bloods very close to Indian—live in these five countries, which are to a large extent covered by forests. From these lands go out a large percentage of the bananas, pineapples and coffee consumed in the world. Only one, Costa Rica, is inhabited almost exclusively by the whites.

The arc in the political sky is complete in the isthmus. Guatemala is governed by parties of the extreme left, among which the Communists, camouflaged under the name of Labor Party, wield considerable influence—though it is probably somewhat on the decline. Costa Rica has a democratic socialistic president, José Figueres. In Nicaragua, General Somoza exercises a dictatorship twenty years old. Honduras is barely commencing to advance hesitantly on the road to democracy, and in El Salvador a colonial government maintains an unstable democracy.

These are the only essential differences among the five countries. In economy, language, folklore, the character of their inhabitants, they have a profound resemblance. A Catholicism, grafted on the ancient beliefs of the Indians, unifies them even more than the activities of the United Fruit Company and other enterprises. Objectively, thus, the conditions exist already for the unification of the five republics, and unification is demanded by the need of defending their sovereignty and building up their economic security through better prices for their products. Unity in administration would vastly reduce costs.

* * *

In the 19th century, the Central Americans understood the needs of unification and accomplished it. But the ambitions of military men destroyed this first attempt. The others which followed, especially in the first third of the 20th century, eventually failed. Each president, each minister, aspired to perpetuate himself in power and resisted the unification campaigns of students, intellectuals and the middle class, which is here an active force for progress.

Finally, several years ago, inspired in part by the efforts to unify Europe, the Central Americans saw that the best road leads not from political unity at the top, but from gradual economic union. Thus it is that for three years, under the guidance of the U. N. Economic Commission for Latin America, periodic conferences have been called either by the economic ministers or the ministers of agriculture, of these countries plus Mexico and Panama.

The beginning is modest. It starts with questions of detail, such as unification of the customs terminology, the founding of a Central American School of Advanced Administrative Studies, and then passes to the more important matters. At the last conference, recently held at San José, Costa Rica, a study was begun about the possibility of creating a Central American merchant fleet, unifying the transport system, and in a more distant future, of doing away with customs and visas. Already a series of Central banks have been put in operation.

The road to travel is admittedly long. The fusion of the five republics in a federated state or a United States of Central America, the final aim of the movement, is not for tomorrow. But it gathers momentum from young men. The average age of the ministers assembled at San José was under 35. With their freedom from old prejudices, there is hope that these halting first steps will be followed by greater ones to come.

INQUISITIVE MONKEYS

If monkeys seem so much like humans it is largely because they are so inquisitive. According to Dr. Robert Butler they want to learn all they can about the world around them. Dr. Butler is a psychologist who has been making some interesting experiments in the primate laboratory of the University of Wisconsin.

In one of these experiments a monkey was given a thirty-second glimpse of the world outside his enclosure after he told a blue from a red colored window. If he pushed the right one, the reward was a look outside. In such attempts to determine a monkey's learning capacity, food is ordinarily the reward.

In Butler's experiments the test monkey can hear the researchers in the laboratory while they are making their observations. Because of the urge to see what the experimenters are doing, the monkey continues to push the window open. He must be vigilant, too, because the experimenter continually shifts the color screens around. If the monkey hits the right window 75 per cent of the time, he is well above average.

"It seems likely that events in the environment are as important as physiological drives in directing the actions of animals, monkeys and men," says Butler. For example, monkeys more readily push open the window to see an electric train operate than to see a plateful of food.

Curiosity—or whatever it may eventually be called—is not as easily satiated as hunger, thirst and the sex drive. In one experiment, a monkey persistently pushed open the window to see what lay outside for nineteen hours. His only reward was his thirty-second glimpse of the psychologists and the laboratory.

NEW LIMBS FOR OLD

Cut off the leg of a salamander and it will grow a new one. A lobster will do as much when he has lost a claw. The new leg or claw is composed of tissue exactly like that of the old.

These well-known facts led some cancer specialists to wonder what would happen if limb tissues capable of regeneration were injected with a cancer-producing agent. Injections into the forelimbs of more than five hundred newts resulted in the production of malignant tumors in only two animals. On the other hand, duplications of the injected limb sprouted.

Dr. Charles Breedis of the University of Pennsylvania's School of Medicine has examined this fascinating subject again. He finds that certain fractions of coal tar, or tar either alone or with added methylcholanthrene, benzpyrene, acetylaminofluorene or scarle red, induce the formation of accessory limbs in from 11 to 68 per cent of his newts. These accessory limbs grow where the cancer-producing agent is injected, and reduplicate normal limb structure. Beryllium

Continued on page 55

Literary Appraisals

THE AMERICA OF JOSE MARTÍ. Selected writings of José Martí. Translated from the Spanish by Juan de Onís. With an introduction by Federico de Onís, illustrated. 335 pp. New York: The Noonday Press.

WITHOUT being so intended, this book is the best possible answer to the Soviet Union's celebration of the centenary of José Martí (born Jan. 28, 1853). The theme of the Cuban hero's life and writings was freedom. One of his finest speeches was the condemnation of a political purge, the execution of a group of Cuban students. He was the sworn enemy of dictatorship. However, by the familiar method of turning history inside out, the Central Committee of the Peace Congress chose Martí as one of the forerunners of Russian efforts on behalf of peace.

The occasion was marked by a meeting at the Center of the Art Workers in Moscow, organized by the Union of Writers of Soviet Russia and the Maxim Gorki Institute of Foreign Literature. A portrait of Martí, of the size usually reserved for Lenin or Stalin, was displayed. Among the speakers were Ilya Ehrenburg and Stepan Shipachov, twice recipient of the Stalin Prize; the Cuban Juan Marinello and the Colombian Jorge Zalamea. Poems by Martí translated into Russian and Armenian were read. Red China issued a stamp with Martí's picture and brought out selections from his work in translation.

* * *

Now who was this so-called precursor of Russian communism? He was a man whose every word was an impassioned denial of everything the Soviet dictatorship stands for. He was one of the greatest poets of the Spanish language whose life was devoted to the independence of Cuba. As a student in Cuba he was imprisoned and then deported to Spain for his defense of freedom of speech. Spain—even liberal Spain—did not afford him that atmosphere of liberty which was as necessary to him as the air he breathed. He returned to this hemisphere. In Mexico, in Guatemala, in Venezuela his free voice was hushed by dictatorship. He came to New York. Here he spent the best years of his life, for he could say what he liked. He organized the free forces of Cuba to achieve the liberation of his island.

Martí expressed his concept of freedom thus: "No nation on earth has a monopoly of human virtue; but there is a political state that has the monopoly of all the virtues: enlightened freedom. Not that freedom representing the violent domination by the downtrodden proletariat of the once powerful rich—for we know that this is a new and fearful tyranny; nor that nominal, self-proclaiming freedom, which on certain lips—unfortunately the most vociferous—stands in the same relation as the Cross of Jesus the Good to the banners of the Inquisition; but that freedom of usage and law which draws its life from the interplay and balance of rights, which carries with it the respect of all as a mutual guarantee, which trusts for its support to that supreme, infallible monitor of human nature: the instinct of self-preservation. Such a political state is to be envied; and for this reason, and not by any special virtue of race, the United States shines as a great nation." Martí loved peace, but not the peace imposed by fear, purges, a muzzled press, freedom in chains. Against such a peace he raised the standard of revolution.

In this selection of his work that has just been published Juan de Onís has succeeded in conveying in English the exuberant, baroque, lyric, romantic prose of Martí without sacrificing its unique flavor or interest. The volume contains some of the most beautiful pages any foreigner has ever written on the United States. The portrait of Peter Cooper or General Grant, the essay on Walt Whitman, and even the article on Buffalo Bill should be included in North American schoolbooks as a part of the country's literary patrimony.

Martí loved the history of the United States, he understood it, he lived it. Lincoln was his hero. He excoriated the venal politicians from the columns of *The New York Sun*; he was living in a country where this could be done without his being sent to Siberia. He defended with a crusader's zeal the liberty of Cuba against the Spanish empire and the greed of North American imperialists. His ideal was a hemisphere of free nations. He could say this, he did say it, and he did well to say this in his clear, ringing voice in New York. He was the forerunner of the Good Neighbor Policy.

The present anthology is the tribute we have all awaited from the United States to Martí. It carries an excellent prologue by Federico de Onís, which is indispensable in setting Martí against the background of his world and his times.

G. A.

THE FINAL HOURS. By José Suarez Carreño. Translated from the Spanish by Anthony Kerrigan. 273 pp. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

S EÑOR CARREÑO was born in Mexico City forty years ago. According to his publishers he is the first writer to have carried off all three of "Spain's foremost literary honors"—for poetry, drama and fiction. It was "The Final Hours" which won him the Nadal Prize in 1949.

It is one of the duties of a critic to avoid judging a book by its translation, unless he be in a position to compare it with the original. But there are limits to this caution. The least the reader can expect is that the translator render the original into an English that makes sense—and that his style is such that it does not offend the ear.

The use, in a book's first few pages, of expressions such as "thitherto" and "at bottom"; of descriptions like "the maids silently going efficiently about their business"—such language does not inspire one with the wish to continue reading. The translator, on the other hand, should not be blamed perhaps for such aberrations as: "Conversations pitched within the limits of sound that people of the elegant can bear could be heard."

These crudities are taken from the first forty pages of "The Final Hours." Thereafter they grow fewer—and this diffuse, extremely uneven, intensely Spanish novel about what its publishers describe as "the night life of present-day Madrid" does gather momentum.

The book tells the story of Manolo, an attractive, orphaned "street-boy," an intelligent young prostitute called Carmen, and Angel Aguado, a wealthy, middle-aged, unpleasant but pathetic neurotic whose life seems to have been warped from childhood by a sadistic nurse. What remains in the memory is not the sordid, utterly pointless lives of these and other people, but the atmosphere of Madrid at night—the suppressed

violence in the crowded taverns, the contrast of the rich and poor on the gran vias, the boys waiting outside nightclubs to earn a peseta for finding a taxi, the women selling "fritters" in the streets before dawn, and over it all, in their talk as well as in their silences, the permanent preoccupation of the Spanish people with death.

With this atmosphere "The Final Hours" is saturated, but of Spain's political atmosphere, of its dictator, of war or revolution, of what any one of his characters in "present-day Madrid" thinks of his country or the world in general, Señor Carreño says not a word. A fact which, in itself, may be significant.

J S

BUZIOS ISLAND, by Emilio Willems, in cooperation with Gioconda Mussolini (Monographs of the American Ethnological Society). Locust Valley, New York, J. J. Agustín, 116 p.

THE PRODUCT of many years of study, Emilio Willems' Buzios Island, written in cooperation with Gioconda Mussolini, is surely the most important contribution to our knowledge of caicara culture so far published. "Caicara" is the name by which the mestizos of the rural areas of the southern Brazilian coast are known.

As in so many other places in Latin America, we find here a curious contrast between the inhabitants of the coast and those of the plateau. The caboclos of the interior—made up principally of Indian, Portuguese, and Negro stock—feel a certain sense of superiority over the caicaras, considering them lazy, immoral, and inclined toward drink. A trip along the southern Brazilian coast seems to confirm the caboclos' worst ideas. The habitat of the caicaras shows little evidence of having been modified by the hand of man. Dense forests with exuberant vegetation growing right down to the water's edge alternate with mangrove swamps in an oppressive, humid, tropical climate. Except for two large centers, Rio de Janeiro and Santos, and a few small ports, the coast seems almost uninhabited and completely uninhabitable. But hidden amid the vegetation, the caicaras go on doing battle with their environment, engaging in fishing and in an agriculture based principally on manioc or cassava, the Indians' contribution to the colony.

Indian cultural survivals are strong and abundant among the caicaras, but are mixed with European and African elements, especially in the field of religion and magic. The isolation in which they have liv-

ed facilitated the development of a rather uniform culture, with characteristics that distinguished it both from other regional cultures and from the dominant national culture of modern Brazil.

The most surprising thing is that behind the apparently static front are proofs of profound changes in the past. During the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, the coast was quite different. At that time it was more important than the interior plateau. A fairly large population filled the old ports of Mambucaba, Parati, Ubatuba, Sao Sebastiao, Iguape, and Cananéia. Its prosperity was based on sugar, rice, and coffee. Sumptuous churches and homes were built. When, partly because of various plagues, the agriculture of the region began to decline, and when new communication routes were opened that concentrated trade in Rio and Santos, the smaller ports were ruined. The population scattered, and now nothing is left but a few artistic treasures, which have been designated "national monuments," and impressive ruins almost buried in tropical vegetation. Sometimes the ostentatious facade of a building is only a curtain covering a backdrop of thickets and weeds. All this had happened by the end of the nineteenth century. The economy of the caicaras dropped almost to a mere subsistence level.

Since 1930 some signs of a new economic rehabilitation, mainly through fishing, have begun to appear. Under government protection colonies of fishermen were established, new techniques were introduced, means of communication were opened, health conditions were improved, and so on. In this reawakening a group of recent arrivals has played a part: the Japanese. The coast seems anxious again to dispute the hegemony of the plateau.



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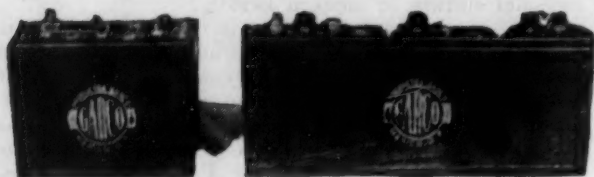
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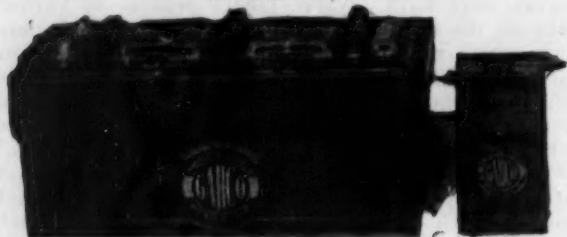
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In view of this briefly sketched background, the extraordinary interest that study of the caicaras holds is easy to understand. A multitude of problems may be profitably analyzed: for example, man's relationship with his environment; the contrast between the culture of the tropical coast and that of the temperate plateau; the effect of economic and technological changes on the socio-cultural structure; the process of transculturation; and so on. In accordance with the present trend in anthropology, the authors of this book decided to concentrate their investigation on a community considered typical of the general culture, and then compare their results with an extensive examination of the region. The community chosen was Búzios Island (the name is the Portuguese word for the univalve shell of a marine mollusk), near the large island of Sao Sebastiao.

The first report of any length on the island was made by Euclides da Cunha, who visited Búzios in 1902. He found 358 inhabitants, living under a patriarchal regime and undergoing a painful transition from a commercial coffee agriculture to a subsistence economy based on farming and fishing. The island's previous history, judging by the few known written references to it and above all by oral tradition, abounds in incidents of piracy and slave trading.

Now reduced to 126, the inhabitants of Búzios are still as skillful at building canoes and as bold at handling them as their ancestors were. There is no private ownership of land, though houses, furniture, tools, canoes, and crops are individually held. The authors offer a minute description of the houses, health conditions, demography, economic activities, and technology.

The family organization, in which remnants of the ancient paternal authority are apparent, shows some deviations from the general pattern of Brazilian life. For example, marriages are relatively unstable, and often women take the initiative in the separation. Feelings of jealousy are not very pronounced, and unmarried women are not penalized for having sexual relations, nor is much importance given to virginity. Religion, as conceived and practiced by the islanders, has little resemblance to Christianity. Though the sacred dances have disappeared and there is no cult of the dead, magic beliefs and customs flourish, especially in relation to childbirth, sickness, storm, and fires.

The population and its culture are Creole, a historically produced mixture of Portuguese and Indian, Willems and Mussolini conclude—part of the caicara culture, a clearly defined Brazilian subculture.

A. P.

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WHERE THE STRANGE ROADS GO DOWN, by Mary and Fred del Villar. New York, The Macmillan Company 243 p. illus.

THE Del Villars may lack the experience of such celebrated exploring couples as the Johnsons and the Denises, but they yield to no one in enthusiasm. They are not specialists of any sort, merely free-lance journalists with a powerful curiosity about Mexican people and places. This is an account of their trek on foot from Lake Pátzcuaro (west of Mexico City) to the Pacific, up the coast a hundred miles or so, and back in a circular route, through a wild, sparsely populated region they found thoroughly fascinating despite all the difficulties willful nature could throw in their path. Roads are almost nonexistent there, but in any case the travelers preferred the unfamiliar sights to be found only on trails. Taking no more gear than two burros could carry, they lived off the land—often meagerly, but everywhere warmed by a friendly welcome. An appalling journey for the average soft-fibered tourist, but one he may enjoy sitting in an armchair and reading about.

R. D. E.

MAGIC BOOKS FROM MEXICO, with an introduction and notes by C. A. Burland Harmondsworth, England, Penguin Books, 1953. 31 pages text and 16 plates.

THE "magic books" are the strips of deerskin or treebark paper on which the Aztecs recorded their history and religion in strange, glowingly colored figures and glyphs. Many were lost in the great fire that accompanied the taking of Tenochtitlán by the Spaniards; others, mainly religious manuscripts, were burn-



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ed by missionaries horrified at their barbaric contents; still more had long since been destroyed by the war-like Mexicans themselves, owing to their custom of setting fire to the temple of every captured city. But the habit of preparing these documents was, as Mr. Burland says in his introduction, "so deeply imbedded in the popular consciousness that it survived in ordinary use for more than a century after the Spanish conquest," and to it we owe much of our knowledge of early Mexico. Serious study of the codices, ignored after the initial post-Cortés burst of interest in the peculiar inhabitants of that outlandish country, began only in the last century, and not much has been done about introducing them to the general public (though surely more than this volume implies). Since more of the codices are now in England than in any other country in the world, it is appropriate that this beautiful little book should have been published there.

T. N

LOPE AGUIRRE, THE WANDERER, by Walker Lowry
New York, Bookman Associates, 1952. 78 p.

NOTHING Lope de Aguirre ever did was successful. As a conquistador, he came to Peru too late to share in the early spoils; as a soldier, he was simply one of thousands, a bit of a trouble-maker, but on the whole inconspicuous; as a conspirator, he was always a follower, and on the losing side at that. Yet in the last year of his life this crippled old failure made South America shudder at his name and schemed, betrayed, and murdered in the interests of one of the maddest plots ever hatched—nothing less than to sail down the Amazon with the three-hundred-man expedition of which he was a member, return by sea to Peru, and snatch it from the King. The writing in this short English account Aguirre's fantastic pilgrimage seems rather overwrought, but academic calm in the face of such material is perhaps impossible.

L. G.



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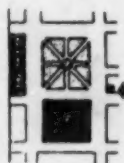
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Current Attractions

SYMPHONY

By Vane C. Dalton

THE National Symphony Orchestra will offer a season of thirteen programs at the Palacio de Bellas Artes, beginning on the 2nd. of this month and ending on May 23rd. As in former years the programs will be given on each consecutive Friday evening and repeated on the following Sunday morning. Judging from all angles, this season, comprising twenty-six concerts, will be the most outstanding in this orchestra's history.

After several years of experimental and not always auspicious probing, the National Institute of Fine Arts has, it seems to me, encountered the right course for this excellent ensemble: it has finally prepared a season that should meet with utmost public approval and establish this ensemble in the place where it truly belongs.

To begin with, in its content and direction, the present season defines an almost complete antithesis as compared with the one of last year, which, despite undeniable artistic merit and many interesting and novel aspects, attracted a reduced audience and a tepid response in the press. Unlike the foregone season, which presented a heterogeneous group of guest conductors and programs that consisted almost entirely of modern or locally unknown compositions, the programs of the present season, presented by three eminent leaders, are made up in large part of popular favorites.

Of the thirteen programs, five will be conducted by Clemens Krauss, five by Sergiu Celibidache, and

three by Carlos Chavez. Krauss, who throughout his long and brilliant career has been the orchestra conductor of the Vienna State Opera, and has led some of the finest orchestras in Europe, is making his initial local appearance. Krauss will conduct the first five of the season's programs, which will present Karl Freund, violinist, and Angelica Morales, pianist, as soloists.

Carlos Chavez Mexico's most illustrious leader and composer, the man whose name is inseparably linked with the evolution of symphony music in Mexico during the past three decades, will conduct the following three programs. The renowned Hungarian violinist Joseph Szigeti, and the Mexican violinist Higinio Ruvalcaba will appear in his programs as soloists.

Finally, the Roumanian conductor Sergiu Celibidache, who achieved such a distinguished record in this city on other occasions, leading the Philharmonic Orchestra, will present the final five programs. Joseph Szigeti will again appear as soloist in one of the programs, in addition to the Italian violinist Franco Ferrari and the young Mexican pianist José Kahán.

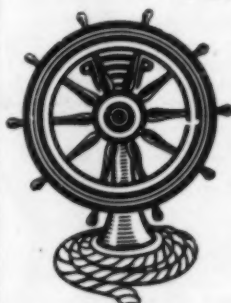
The return to Mexico of Sergiu Celibidache will be welcomed by thousands of ardent admirers. Since his last local sojourn two years ago he has reaped additional laurels in many parts of the world. Conducting not long ago a Ravel and Tchaikowsky program at the Scala of Milan, in the consensus of Italian cri-

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ties, he broke all symphony concert records in the number of accorded curtain calls. He was, moreover, the winner in 1953 of the annual award granted by the Society of German Music Critics to the year's most distinguished conductor.

Conducting at present a season of concerts by the Israeli Symphony Orchestra at Tel Aviv, Celibidache has been also the recipient of repeated tumultuous ovations.

As regards Szigeti, I have gathered that his return to Mexico after an absence of some fifteen years is in a manner prompted by a desire for vindication. I can readily understand this desire for I was in the audience when he performed here at that time and witnessed his contretemps. It seems that he arrived in this city on the eve of the concert and his health was affected by the altitude. It was in all a rather unfortunate concert, for in addition to the handicap of his illness he suffered the mishap of two broken strings. The obviously commiserate audience could not, however, conceal its disappointment. So the great violinist is coming back to this city to settle, so to speak, a pending account.

During a recent concert tour in Japan, concluding his program before a twenty thousand audience in the Tokyo Baseball Park, Szigeti found himself confronted by a rare predicament. The huge audience literally refused to let him conclude his performance by an interminable demand for encores. It was not till he was on the verge of sheer exhaustion that the authorities finally came to his aid and called it a day. Then he was actually buried under a deluge of flowers. Returning to the United States for a series of concerts in New York, Philadelphia, Boston and other cities, he has been received everywhere with veritable acclaim.

In order to appear in Mexico Szigeti cancelled two much more profitable engagements elsewhere. He will arrive in this city ten days before his initial concert, so as to fully acclimatize himself, for he is determined to enjoy the satisfaction of rectifying his local failure of fifteen years ago.

* * *

The season's total program is made up as follows:
Clemens Klauss conducting on April 2nd. and
4th. Weber's "Oberon" overture; Brahms' Second



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symphony; Strauss' "Death and Transfiguration" and Wagner's "Tannhauser" overture.

April 9th. and 11th. Haydn's Symphony op. 88; Strauss' symphonic poem "Don Juan"; Beethoven's concerto for a violin and orchestra, op. 61, with Karl Freund as soloist, and Beethoven's "Leonore" overture.

April 14th. and 18th. Bruckner's Mass in mi minor, and Haydn's "The Seven Words," with the Chorus of the National Conservatory.

April 23rd. and 25th. Wagner's overture from "The Master Singers of Nuremberg"; Brahms' Concerto No. 2 for piano and orchestra, with Angelica Morales as soloist, and Strauss' Domestic Symphony.

April 30th and May 2nd. Mussorgsky-Ravel's "Pictures of an Exposition"; Dukas' "A Sorcerer's Apprentice," and Tchaikowsky's Fifth symphony.

* * *

Carlos Chavez conducting on May 7th. and 9th. Haydn's symphony "The Queen"; Chavez' Fifth symphony for a string orchestra, and Dvorak's "New World" symphony for a string orchestra, and Dvorak's "New World" symphony.

May 14th. and 16th. Maria Teresa Prieto's symphony; Mozart's Concerto No. 4 for a violin and orchestra, with Higinio Ruvalcaba as soloist, and Beethoven's Fifth symphony.

May 21st. and 2nd. Tchaikowsky's "Capriccio Italiano," Chavez' H. P. suite; Bartok's Concerto for a violin and orchestra, with Joseph Szigeti as soloist, and Stravinsky's "Firebird" suite.

* * *

Sergiu Celibidache conducting on May 28th and 30th. Milhaud's "Saudades do Brazil"; Brahms' Concerto for a violin and orchestra, with Joseph Szigeti as soloist, and Sibelius' Fifth symphony.

June 4th. and 6th. Brahms' Third symphony; an unannounced work by a Mexican composer, and Stravinsky's "Didertissement."

June 11th. and 13th. Bizet's Symphony in Do major, and Strauss' "Till Eulenspiegel."

June 18th. and 20th. An unannounced work by a Mexican composer; Mozart's Concerto for a piano and orchestra, with José Kahan as soloist, and Shostakovich' Fifth symphony.

June 25th. and 27th. Gabrielli's aria from "La Batalla"; Concerto for a violin and orchestra by an unannounced author, and Bartok's Concerto for a violin and orchestra, with Franco Ferrari appearing as soloist in both.

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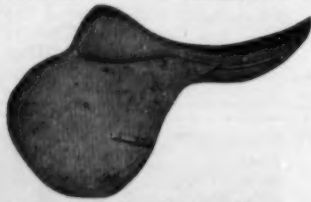
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Art Events

S ALON de la Plastica Mexicana (Calle de Puebla No. 154) is currently presenting a group of paintings in oil by the gifted Mexican painter Gustavo Montoya. A native of Mexico City, Montoya studied at the San Carlos Academy and subsequently traveled and painted in Europe and the United States. His themes are highly imaginative fantasies developed in a sensitive gamut of color.

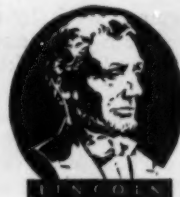
FOLLOWING the exposition of prints by contemporary French engravers, the Arte Mexicano gallery (Calle de Milán No. 18) is showing a very interesting collection of paintings in oil by the internationally recognized Spanish artist Joaquin Peinado.

A LARGE and varied collection of drawings in different mediums by a representative group of modern Mexican artists comprises this month's offering at the Salon de la Estampa (Calle de Lisboa No. 48).

E L CIRCULO de Bellas Artes (Calle de Niza No. 43) is showing at this time a group of paintings in oil and water color, as well as some pastel and pencil drawings by Simone G. Darot. Ranging from still life to landscapes and portraits, this exposition presents to our public a new painter of considerable force.

A GROUP exhibit of works by a large number of Spanish painters residing in Mexico, titled "The Social and Political Moment of Spain," is open to the public at the Ateneo Español de Mexico (Avenida Morelos No. 26).

WORKS by outstanding students of painting and sculpture at the Escuela Esmeralda and the San Carlos Academy are on permanent exhibit at the Galeria Nuevas Generaciones (Corner of Heroes and Esmeralda).



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HECTOR Ayala Guzmán, Telesforo Herrera Arroyo and Hector Martinez Artache, recent graduates of the San Carlos Academy, are having their initial show at the Galeria Romano (José Maria Marroqui No. 5). All three of these young painters reveal ample technical facility, and though on the whole their works yet lacks a defined personal assertion, one finds in it traces of venturesome probing.

A HIGHLY interesting exposition of arts and crafts by American Indians, sponsored by the Information Service of the United States government, is being offered during this month by the José Clemente Orozco Gallery (Avenida Peralvillo No. 55).

OLGA COSTA, the Russian-born Mexican painter, is exhibiting a group of her newer works at the Cuchitril Gallery of the Librería Obregón (Avenida Juárez No. 30) Especially impressive in this exhibit are the highly imaginative still life compositions of Mexican toys and other handcraft objects.

LITHOGRAPHS and wood engravings dealing with political themes, which illustrated Mexican books and periodicals during the period 1845-1856, have been gathered in a quite unusual exposition offered during the course of this month at the Galeria de la Estampa (Calle de Palma No. 9-407).

THE highly successful exposition of paintings and drawings on Mexican themes by the distinguished artist Michael Baxte at the Galeria Nueva (Calle de San Luis Potosi No. 213) will continue throughout the entire month.

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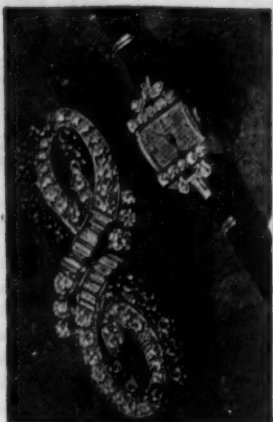
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Patterns of an Old City

Continued from page 26

away. It was hard to give up a young wife and child and a pleasant little house in the suburbs, to walk away from his job and tackle a new and quite different assignment; but there are time when men are eager to endure such hardship. She never knew with certainty if this was unavoidable, if he could have not arranged somehow to remain at home; she only knew that his mind was set and that it would be futile to attempt to make him change it. He had been too young, he said, and still at school on the other occasion, and now it was his turn. There was nothing to worry about. They would hold his job open for him, and he would be back soon. Someone had to be building bridges and a war was as much an engineer's job as an infantry trooper's. So he went off to build bridges and landing strips in Korea. It was a man's duty and a young man's privilege. It was a job, like any other job, and it had to be done.

The weather in Korea, he used to write her, is hardly the kind you read about in tourist folders, but there are days when the sun is bright and the harsh and rugged landscape actually seems beautiful. It was on a day like this that he was carrying out a repair detail on a bridge across a deep ravine, quite a distance back of the fighting. Then, of a sudden, the jets came roaring across the sky, dipped over the ravine and dropped their load. He was not hit; in some freakish manner his body was virtually uninjured. He was only lifted by the blast and hurled through the air and thrown a few feet away. The bruises he received were of no importance. But his nerves were torn to shreds



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by the concussion; he was completely disoriented inside without physical injury.

* * *

It is not easy to patch up a man who has no bodily wounds, to heal an injury that does not yield to plasmas or antibiotics, to mend a body that is physically intact yet utterly demolished. He was evacuated to a base hospital in Japan and kept there for several months, and showing very slight improvement was finally shipped back to the States and interned at a veteran's hospital in California. She and Lee were close to him during the ensuing months of his slow convalescence. They were long and trying months when hope constantly alternated with despair. Physically, though frail, he seemed perfectly sound, and yet the obscure inner illness went on. It was not till he obtained a conditional discharge and they returned to Bridgeport that she believed he had fully recovered. Back on his old job, installed in a comfortable house, almost as nice as the one they had before, he got hold of himself again.

And withal she could see that he was intrinsically changed, that he was not quite the same person he had been in the past. He never fully regained his buoyancy and cheer, he grew shy and withdrawing and was reluctant to receive friends or accept invitations. Only his zest for work was now greater than ever. His mind became entirely centered on his job. He often stayed at the plant late into the night or worked at home on Sundays in order to finish some urgent task. It seemed as if he were grimly determined to make up for the two years he had lost and to prove to himself and to others that he was as good, indeed, even better than he had been before.

He was kind to her and Lee in a wan and absent-minded way, thought he shunned amusement or recreation. Even an occasional movie show bored or depressed him. Fearfully she perceived that he was not completely well, that he yet bore a trace of the obscure inner illness, and found her sole reassurance in his inexhaustible energy, in his endless capacity for work, in the undeniable fact that he was getting on, making splendid headway.

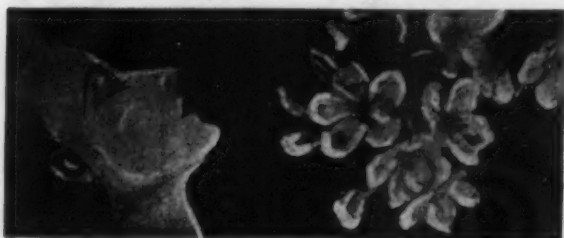
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And then this reassurance vanished. One day his chief called her on the telephone and discreetly told her that maybe Don had been overdoing things a bit, that there was nothing wrong of course, but it would be fine for him to relax for a while, and this being June he had arranged with the company to extend his vacations this year from two weeks to a full month. A nice fishing trip would perhaps be just the thing.

So they went up to the woods in Maine and leased a cottage on the bank of a lake, and made a brave effort to loaf, to fish and swim or tramp in the woods gathering flowers or berries. Don appeared to be determined to stoically bear the great hardship of idleness. He sought to be cheerful, to guard an even temper, to affect a carefree air; but she could see that he was actually under a great strain, that he was concealing something from her that heavily weighed on his mind, that he was harassed by a hidden fear.

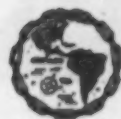
And yet the vacation seemed to improve his condition. He had put on weight and gathered a healthy tan, and by the time they returned to the city and he went back to his job he had apparently recovered his former confidence and zest. Eagerly he resumed his routine and became immersed in it even more completely than he had been before. He worked indefatigably, with a grave determination, denying himself rest, begrudging the time required for food and sleep, as if subjecting himself to some crucial test. And yet, as time passed, she began to sense that he was not fully successful. She began to sense in his demeanor a suppressed anxiety, a hidden doubt in his ability to cope, a fear that he was slipping.

And this hidden fear made him try that much harder to get on. It impelled him to struggle against his deficiency, it drove him on desperately and futilely, for growing bewildered by his failure, the harder he tried the less he achieved, the more deeply and inex-

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trically he became entangled in his problem. It was dreadful to watch him struggle like this without being able to help him.

Thus she was not surprised when after a time his chief again called her on the telephone to tell her not to worry, that Don was essentially all right, that he was just somehow bent on overtaxing himself and that seemed to affect his nerves, that she must try and make him see that it was not a demotion, that his salary would be the same as before, only for the time being he would be relieved of more strenuous and responsible assignments, would be given simpler and easier tasks, and that meanwhile the company doctor was giving him a thorough checkup.

He worked on for some weeks after that, sustaining a valiant struggle, yet palpably growing worse, until he was ordered to take a complete rest for an indefinite period. It was during the days that he sat at his desk in his study blankly staring at his papers without lifting a hand that he came to his final collapse.

Doctor Gollub took over when other doctors gave up. He admitted at the outset that Don's case was rather difficult but he made a hopeful prognosis: he said it was a question of time, how much time he did not know. And seeing that her health too had been undermined by prolonged worry and strain, that she was hardly equal to the task of nursing Don, he also took care of her.

But in the end Don outwitted them both. He was allowed to take a sleeping tablet on nights when he was excessively restless, and she was always very cautious in giving it to him only one at the time, keeping the phial safely hidden from his reach; yet despite all her caution he managed in some way stealthily to save up enough of them to take an overdose.

Dimly, during the ensuing months of anguish, she remembered that she yet had Lee and hence was compelled to live on. But there was always the torment of self-accusation, the sense of guilt and remorse, the persistent gnawing feeling that somehow she was to blame, that something she had done or failed to do had been the fatal cause. Like a black shadow this feeling pursued her relentlessly; it came to her each morning with the moment of waking; it crowded her sleep with grotesque visions; it cast her into desolate brooding and into final relieving lapses of oblivion during the hours of day.

* * *

The bedlam of the radio suddenly ceased across the hallway and now a complete calm prevailed in the room. But she was not aware of it. She was only



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aware of an abrupt and definite change; she only sensed that something in her midst had sharply altered, that something now was entirely different. She was only conscious of some vastly significant change.

She rose from her chair, paced into the adjacent bedroom and switched on the light. Lee's head, framed in a tangle of tawny curls, rested deep over the pillow along one side of the bed. Her chubby hand clasped in a tiny fist lay over her chin. She stood at the bedside scrutinizing the peaceful rosy face of her child as if she had never seen it before, as if it were the face of a total stranger, then picked up the pillow upon which she was to sleep herself, took hold of it firmly with both hands, placed it over the little face and bore down on it with the full weight of her body.

There was a stifled outcry and a squirming under the quilt as she continued bearing down on the pillow. And then suddenly she stopped distracted, for a telephone commenced to ring sharply, insistently, over and over again in a piercing imperative summons. She released the pillow, dropped it on the floor, ran back to the livingroom, and while the shrill ringing was still resounding in her ears recalled, startled and perplexed, that there was no telephone in the apartment, that there was no telephone anywhere near.

She paused in the middle of the room, her head turning from side to side, her eyes wandering, searching, as if rediscovering the place, murmuring, "Not here... Not here... It was not here..." Then, still murmuring these words, she turned and on trembling knees re-entered the bedroom.

She saw Lee sitting upright, extending her arms, her face convulsed in fright, staring at her, tears welling in her terrified eyes. She heard her say, "Mummy, Mummy, I had... I had an ugly thing... An awful dream... I had... I..."

She listened tensely, observing her child's contorted face and twitching chin till she broke off in a sob. Then, dropping on her knees at the bedside, she said, "Yes, darling. Yes, my sweet. It was nothing. Nothing at all. It was not here. Not here." And repeating these words time and again she gathered her in her arms and clasped her tight to her breast.



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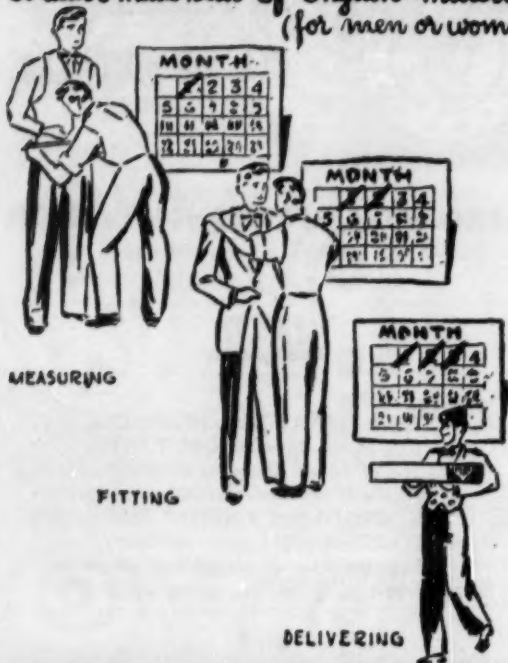
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Mexico, D. F.

A Story of Deep-Sea Fishing

Continued from page 29

a long, stout piece of rope. No trees were handy, however, and since only two men had put in an appearance, we were not unduly alarmed about our lack of costumes. A cordial welcome cheered all of us.

Once on dry land Sanchez very soon recovered from his cold, soupy look and led the way to the beacon tower, where hammocks were quickly swung.

Enveloped in a blanket, looking like a lamented cigar-store Indian, I sought out a hammock and soon was buried deep in the arms of Morpheus.

The sun beat me up—not physically—the next morning, but without regret on my part. Before our breakfast, which consisted of simple Mexican fare, my inquisitive complex impelled me to investigate the surroundings.

The lighthouse tower was probably ninety to one hundred feet high and housed the aforementioned two keepers, one a bachelor, the other with a wife and daughter, who also lived in the lighthouse. Separate apartments of several rooms each were on the two bottom floors.

The staircase to the beacon was narrow and winding. Toiling laboriously up the snaking flight, we reached the light and discovered it to be a French-made lamp which had to be wound by hand to keep the light revolving. A single winding kept it rotating for some time, but it was necessary for one of the keepers to be alongside the lamp at all hours during the night. Each had a shift of six hours, I learned, first one keeping his lonely vigil, then being relieved by the other, for the lamp was an alcohol burner and had to be watched constantly lest its lifesaving light fail and treacherous Neptune take toll of daring mariners.

The lamp revolves slowly. Its beams pierce the enveloping blackness and shine forth far over the darkened, lapping waters of the Gulf. And all the time one of these two soft-spoken natives, with only his conscience for company, keeps his vigil.

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birds, and this attraction, like that of the flame for the moth, results in thousands of birds being destroyed every year when they dash themselves against the lantern cover. This is particularly true off the coast of Germany, which is now combating the evil with new lights.

Descending the small, stone stairs—this was accomplished, be it said, with far greater ease than the climb—we went out on the “beach” and surveyed the sparkling blue waters, that rolled restlessly toward the protective bar, glistening in the bright sunlight like a huge wavy turquoise.

Within the reef it was fairly calm and placid, though ever-widening ripples agitated the surface. Outside this sanctuary it was something else again. It did not look forbidding. Indeed, after the tossing of the night previous, it seemed quite calm, though there was a rather resounding swish as the surf struck and the spray leaped high in the air. We gazed long and longingly; the monotonous swell of the water sent wave upon wave rolling with measured beat against the barrier. Nothing relieved the vast expanse of the Gulf; only the swish-swish of the water broke a silence that lay thick and heavy.

We again retired to the lighthouse's dining quarters, a fairly large square room with a table standing near the center, its unvarnished four-by-six top giving the impression of having been rough hewn; particularly in these days of highly polished veneers. Several chairs stood invitingly about and a protruding cupboard sat halfway up the side wall on the right side of the room. Here the conference was held.

To fish or not fish—that was the question. A majority held the opinion that it was too rough. But, said my good companions with becoming gallantry and typical generosity, it is for the Señor Americano to make the decision.

Having brought so much discomfort to Sanchez, due to my yesterday's disregard for weather, and seeing the possibility of a complex by too hasty a decision, I debated earnestly with myself before “rushing in where angels fear to tread.” I admitted inwardly that my measure as a master high seas angler was an

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unknown quantity. Having made a reputation as a sailor it was questionable wisdom to risk another session. Although I am ever ready to expatiate freely on the big ones that got away, this is a license which is preempted by anglers of whatsoever experience and is considered no sin. Here at home, among cronies, I am known as one who has fished more and caught less than any of the regulars. But what of it? Don't I get a kick out of the ol' bridge, the clouds, the whispering leaves, the kildeer's shrill cry and so many other things? After all, what does it matter when fish won't come around? It's an old story. You remember the fishermen of sacred writ who had repeatedly cast their net and only had two fish to show. This line of philosophic introspection weakened my earlier determination to look for pretty shells. The urge of the Waltonian is strong.

Just to gain a little time, I questioned Mundito. "What brand of fish would we be most likely to get out there?"



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Not being an ichthyologist, I didn't know that this meant sharks, but it sounded as if he were highhatting me, so I let on that pelagic species were my special dish. Later I learned that Mundito is El señor Presidente del Club de Pesca of Yucatan and a recognized authority in fishing circles.

"Muy bien, vamos," said I, dropping into Spanish for emphasis and because it gave me an opportunity of using "go," the most irregular verb in the Spanish vocabulary. If you can conjugate "to go" you are in a fair way to master the other fifty per cent of the language.

* * *

This time, with an opportunity to scan the reef in daylight, I had little difficulty in picking an opening in the barrier. The pilot made through this into the open water and started away to the right from the lighthouse, paralleling the shore line, which lay a half-mile to the north, the white sand of the beach glistening in the morning sunlight like a crayola mark drawn through a blue picture. The blue of the heavens dipped to meet the slightly deeper hued waters, both touching the sun-kissed sands.

The favored fishing banks were twenty kilometers (twelve miles) distant. We trolled all the way, unsuccessfully. The little motor was propelling the boat along at a sharp clip, too fast, I thought, for successful angling. As we neared our rendezvous we noticed several Cuban fishing smaeks, small skiffs not any too seaworthy in appearance. These Cuban fishermen feel secure poaching in Mexican waters, owing to the numerical strength of the latter's navy.

More experienced in luring tropical finny denizens of the deep to their bait than I, my companions agreed that prospects were anything but rosy. In fact, conditions were such that the Cubans had not even thrown a line overboard. But we tried.

Here and there we trolled. Every place looked, the same to me. And no luck.

The sun was nearing the zenith; it was bright, warm and cheerful, though the absence of fish was discouraging. I was hungry.

Having learned my lesson before, I didn't waste any time asking about the possibilities of obtaining some refreshments, but bluntly went to the bottom of the thing with "cuando comémos"—"When do we eat?"

Nice fellows, these three compañeros. Or maybe they were hungry, too.

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We headed for shore, divested ourselves of all but under-pants perhaps a hundred yards from the shore line, plunged into the water and swam to the sandy beach, there to frolic in the warm sunshine. Now we found ourselves in a predicament. No, not an interruption of our carefree frolicking, but it happened all our matches had been soaked the night before. How to make a fire? Then and there, my friends, speaking in the manner of the advertisements, then and there I realized that I should have paid attention while reading that book on "Woodcraft." My entire kingdom for a flint and steel. Or, better still, a good match!

* * *

While one of the Mayas was rubbing cocoanut shells together very briskly and with a remarkable display of hopefulness—and he did succeed in finally lighting a fire—Agustin had a happy thought. It seemed so, anyway. Turtle eggs, he opined, should be thereabouts. I couldn't see how turtle eggs were going to help start a fire, but said nothing.

Instead of searching along the water's edge in the warm sand of the beach for them, as I thought, we—Agustin, Felipe and I—trudged into a swampy scrub woodland.

From previous readings, I understood that the female turtle selected a likely spot near high-water mark, but at a sufficient distance inland so that the sea would not wash away her eggs. As many as two hundred eggs are laid at one sitting, deposited in a large, shallow hole. The eggs are spherical in shape, hardly so large as a golf ball. The shell is soft and each is dented. It was somewhat of a surprise, therefore, to turn our backs to the sea and tramp into the marsh. The grass was high, coarse and heavy; the few trees small of trunk and of stunted growth. The grasses rubbed unpleasantly against my bare limbs. The others didn't seem to mind, particularly the bronzed Maya, whose darkened skin was as tough as horsehide.

We scrutinized that marshy spot from one end to the other, but those turtle eggs, if any, must have heard us coming. I'm still wondering if they are really the delicacy they're reputed to be.



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Returning to our comrades, a fire was blazing cheerfully. The other of the Mayas had clambered up a nearby tree and cut off and brought down some coconuts. Green, of course, and with the huge outer shell not often seen in our markets at home.

The milk in these is not the familiar cloudy white, but is almost as colorless and clear as water. It was our beverage. And might I pause here a moment to mention a childhood misunderstanding? While delighted with "Robinson Crusoe" and other tales of shipwreck—rescue on a raft, or what you will—I never could quite comprehend why the hero and heroine of such stories always suffered with an unquenchable thirst while having all that nice bluish-green water around them. Ugh! I've found out since.

A papaya tree furnished plenty of fruit, which with a sixty pound bunch of bananas seemed almost enough.

But to return to my story. The piece de resistance of our charmingly simple repast was a can of spaghetti. It tasted fine.

After a short rest, Agustin, the pilot and I decided to test our piscatorial luck again. We swam out to the boat, donned our clothes and headed toward open water. Soon the shore line was scarcely distinguishable, at times being entirely lost to view; at others, showing faint and thin on the horizon.

This time we were more fortunate. Eleven fish were soon squirming on the bottom of the boat, none very large and all unfamiliar in shape and color to me. I had no reason to complain. My first cast that is, the first time I tossed my line over the gunwale—netted two fish, and of the eleven I may modestly take credit for seven. Too bad, with those numbers, we were not playing another game which enjoys considerable popularity with the ebony-hued sons of Africa, and others as well.

* * *

But our chances for the big fellows looked slim. We were ready to turn back when Agustin—persistent fellow this namesake of Aramis—told the pilot of a favored bank.

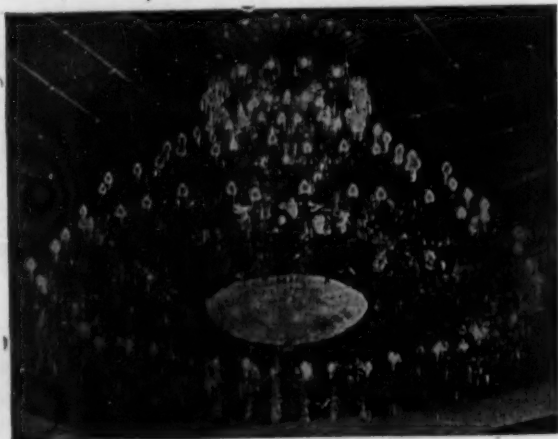
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Whether conditions changed or not, we got a draft of fishes that would make that most celebrated of all anglers—good old St. Peter—envious. They fairly swarmed about, eager for our bait.

We were fishing native style. No resilient rod and light tackle, but rather a coarse, heavy hand-line that stretched far in the wake of the boat when extended its full length. The hooks were strong and large, with a single barb. For the hammer-head shark we were using a sizable chunk of horse meat, brought from Merida for the purpose, while for the others we waited with mullet. These mullets had been caught with a cast-net, in the use of which Mundito is quite expert. It looks easy, but it requires considerable practice to handle the net with grace and correctness.

Our catch, of course, far exceeded that of the angler who would test his skill against the fish with a few-ounce rod and none-too-heavy tackle. The tigerish barracuda, the powerful kingfish, fair-sized Spanish mackerel, a few young Jewfish, several small shark-like specimens with the triangular fin raising above the back, and a single hammer-head made up the catch. There were no tarpons to thrill with their spectacular leap into the air, their amazing bursts of speed and powerful dashes for liberty. I agree that the highest enjoyment of tarpon fishing comes when you take a "Silver King" on suitable tackle, but that is for the master angler.

My greatest thrill came when a barracuda, the "tiger of the sea," took my bait and set his brakes. A game, fierce, hard fighter this fish proved to be and it was not long before I understood clearly enough that he was out to see just who was who. I pulled strongly; it was difficult to move him. Then of a sudden he dashed toward the boat, circled it and swam wildly about. Beads of perspiration stood on my forehead. I had been working hard before and my hands were beginning to get sore. This particular fish must have known, for he put up a decidedly stubborn resistance. Slowly but surely, hand over hand, I pulled him to the side of the boat, where he was promptly gaffed and hauled in. He was a big fellow, sixty or seventy pounds, mas o menos, and some five feet in length.

Wonder what would happen if one of us hooked a shark? We had been trolling along when suddenly

the pilot pointed to Agustin's bait and we saw a shark about to seize it. A moment later the fish bit viciously, much after the manner of the others.

The fight was on! And a merry chase he led us. "Give him line," yelled the pilot, loud enough to be heard a mile.

"Now yank him!" I chipped in, just as if I knew something about sharks.

The line sizzled through Agustin's hands until he took a turn around a post, which temporarily stopped the flight, but nearly turned the boat over. The old pirate rolled out on the surface and made a big splash. He was soon off on another retreat, and I added to the excitement by grabbing the line, which burnt my hands as it whizzed through them.

"See him go—he's headed for Cuba!"

"Hold him cowboy! Here he comes again!"

"Shoot him, pilot."

"Pull in your slack, Agustin, old scout."

Finally, weary and sore, Agustin, little by little, dragged the big boy to the boat. He was an immense hulk. The pilot sent a bullet crashing into the shark's head and we let it go at that.

Finally the boat was weighted down with fish and three happy, though tired, anglers. We returned to shore and luckily the Maya still had the fire burning. Several of the smaller fish were fried and Sanchez assured me that they tasted best that way. They were very palatable. Following our feast we started for Dzilam.

The little boat struggled valiantly under its load; the motor puffed bravely, though it succumbed once or twice, coughing, gasping, like a stricken thing. But always it started gamely again after a brief respite.

It was a long voyage back. Six hours had elapsed from the time we started until we clambered on to the rickety wharf at Dzilam.

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My hands were sore and blisters were raising about the base of the fingers. You see, the hand-line was coarse and those fish had given us a real fight. An angler certainly could develop muscular forearms pulling such big ones in!

A pipe, warm clothing, an appetizing dinner, then a hammock to loll in—that made me content and I listened attentively, I hope, to the stories of previous fishing trips, none so successful as ours. Drowsiness came stealing up on me, but I was not an unwilling victim. The trade winds had sprung up, fanning the limestone plain with the breath of the sea. Wrapped tightly in a blanket, I fell into a profound slumber deep in my hammock. Quite a trick to get into a hammock comfortably, but it is very restful once you've mastered it.

The next morning some one suggested another short try at fishing, but Sanchez and I determined to spend the morning shooting. Mundito and Agustin again set out over the blue waters of the Gulf... and their catch was fair.

The shooting expedition proved exhilarating. No "bad" words from Uncle now. He was in his own element, thoroughly familiar with field and forest. An excellent shot, he had a lot of fun. So did I. But the birds didn't. We came back with a nice bag of assorted shore birds, some of which I had never seen before.

* * *

Now for a siesta! A cool spot in the shade of some palms invited us to stretch out. Through half-closed eyes I watched some pelicans sailing over the water, ever and anon plying their trade. Quickly I slipped into the land of dreams and there met that genial sportsman, Irvin Cobb, whereupon the following phantasy ensued.

"How are yuh, Irvin? Nice day and everything."

"It's all that and then some," says he.

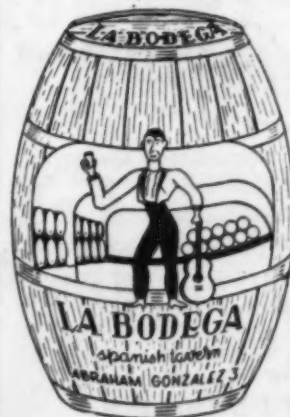
I could see he was dying to tell me a yarn of importance.

"Anything new or startling?" It does not take

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much to start him.

"Well, I 'spose you know about the pointer pup I sent to Sanchez?"

"Yeh, he's a beauty—but is he any good?"

"Well, I'll tell you—I had a celebrated veterinary surgeon operate on him."

"Yuh did?"

"Sure did, and he exchanged that pointer's inwards with a pelican's, and now—listen to this—and now the pup points minnows good as the best of them!"

"Well, that's great. How's the pelican getting along?"

"Not so well, not so well. He's down with a bad case of distemper now."

Un Poco de Todo

Continued from page 33

hydroxide is also effective. Benzpyrene, acetylamino-fluorene, scarlet red, Trituturs sarcoma (bits of malignant tumor from newts) alone fail to make new limbs sprout. Only methyleholanthrene can raise malignant tumors, and these can be transplanted. But methylcholanthrene is no good in raising accessory limbs.

Malignant tumors developed in two newts by means of methyleholanthrene could be transplanted. So it looks to Dr. Breedis as if some of his predecessors in this field of investigation had leaped to hasty or unjustified conclusions. Cancer-producing agents can make not only tumors grow but normal limbs as well. But Dr. Breedis sees little reason to believe that there is any casual connection between extra limbs and malignant tumors.

PSYCHOLOGY OF THE NEW SCIENTIST

In a recent issue of the "American Scientist," journal of Sigma Xi and the Research Society of America, a prominent psychiatrist and psychoanalyst warns that young scientists are not being given the proper emotional preparation for a tedious, unprofitable and frequently disappointing life as research scientists.

Dr. Lawrence S. Kubie of the Yale School of Medicine warns that there is a possibility of a new psy-

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chosocial ailment among young scientists because they are not being told that the monetary rewards of a career in science are slow and uncertain. The ailment may be somewhat like the gangster tradition of dead-end kids, he warns.

"Are we witnessing the development of a generation of hardened, cynical, amoral, embittered, disillusioned young scientists?" he asked. "If so, for the present the fashioning of implements of destruction offers a convenient outlet for their destructive feelings, but the fault will be ours and not theirs if this tendency should increase through the coming years and should find even more disastrous channels of expression.

"Certainly the idyllic picture of the innocent, childlike scientist who lives a life of simple, secure, peaceful, dignified contemplation has become an unreal fantasy. Instead, the emotional stresses of his career have increased to a point where only men of exceptional maturity and stability can stand up to them for long and remain clear-headed and generous-hearted under such psychologically unhygienic conditions.

"Thoughtful educators are beginning to realize that the socio-economic basis of the life of the scientist must be entirely overhauled; that the psychological setting of his life needs drastic revision, and that at the same time the emotional preparation for a life of research is at least as important as is the intellectual training."

Dr. Kubie warns that it is not wise to educate young men to high scientific ideals unless they are also given fair and repeated warning that they may never be able to earn a dignified independence for their own old age, or an education comparable to their own for their children. The problem of helping young scientists attain emotional maturity is made more difficult, he said, because preparation requires them to remain for years in the immature status of students.

There is a high incidence of "nervous breakdown" among scientists in their middle years, Dr. Kubie commented.

On the Shores of Lake Patzcuaro

Continued from page 25

cause of a lot more excitement, and whenever we took them out in a usually vain attempt to work, swarms of children whose existence we had never been aware of appeared from nowhere and closed ranks around us in mute admiration. We finally gave up any idea of work and communicated with our families on hurriedly penciled postcards.

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Thus we lived for months, cordially received everywhere, often invited to share a meal or a drink, to hear a local mariachi orchestra. One day we got lost in the mountains. After riding for hours, we arrived ravenous at a ranch and asked for some beans and tortillas. A boy in overalls with the air of a Spanish grandee treated us to an elaborate dinner, refusing to accept anything in return.

We purchased a number of things during our camping trip and were never overcharged. In Arias de Morales, a little town 25 miles beyond Pátzcuaro, I once bought a pistol belt. Shortly afterward a man in a café asked me how much I had paid for it. "Ten pesos," I replied. "¡Por Dios!" the man guffawed, "how do they sell to the gringos cheaper than to us?" He had paid twelve pesos for an identical belt.

* * *

Only the forcible realization that our money was giving out and our permits about to expire could make us think of leaving. One morning we announced our departure. That night Don Salud appeared outside our tent followed by the entire masculine population of the village—fifty to sixty men and boys. They brought guitars and violins and pulque for a little good-by fiesta. We drank and we sang, and Don Salud danced. When someone cried "Que baile la güera," Mary, the only woman present, stepped out in pigtailed and dungarees from the shadow of the trees and danced with him around the big sombrero shining in the moonlight. Afterward we all sang "Qué lindo es Michoacán, la tierra donde nací" (How beautiful is Michoacán, the land where I was born). Tears mixed freely on brown and white cheeks pressed together in a last "adiós."

The following day the gringos were gone. But all the scribes in Pátzcuaro's market must know our address by now, to judge by the number of letters we receive, all neatly typed, asking when we are going back.

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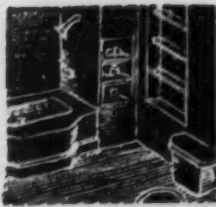
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Joaquin Serenades his Aunt

Continued from page 22

I thought things were going along very nicely, but Joaquin seemed to think that his aunt still needed more volume, and suggested that we group nearer the window. The window was high above the street, however, and when we got too close, the wall muffled the sound. Finally, Pablo the bass player raised his hand for silence. "Señores, with your permission, I have the suggestion. What this orchestra needs—to make sufficient volume for the lady—is brass; and only three blocks from here lives my first cornetist, José, who is doubtless wondering why he has not been invited to this fine serenade."

Joaquin immediately sent a messenger, and in a short time our ranks and volume were swelled by a first-class triple-tongued cornetist, who brought a smile of real appreciation to the face of the dear aunt. The serenade was a success. We went through our entire repertoire again, much to the satisfaction of everyone, except possibly the police chief, who had given us permission to serenade. I rather doubt if he realized the proportions it was eventually to reach. The crowd had increased by then, and so had the distance from the cantina. It was necessary to have five boys fetching brandy.

Finally we began to wander back toward the center of town, serenading without favor or prejudice at each street corner, as we traveled; but I was beginning to get sleepy. Everyone seemed to have forgotten that we were no longer entertaining the deaf aunt. I saw a good chance, and knowing I could never explain departure, I simply dodged around a corner and struck for home.

The music continued in the distance, and sounded sweeter the farther I got from it. Evidently they had not missed me, and I was sure that they did not need me; the music carried nicely to any quarter of the town.

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The moon was low, now, and the palms and poinciana trees cast lacy shadows on the stucco walls. My footsteps echoed hollowly in the empty streets. The scent of gardenias came from flowered patios, and a nightingale burst into answering song to the dimming serenade. Somewhere a rooster crowed, and a light breeze rustled in the great, arching, wild fig trees, in front of my house. It had been a wonderful night, and my bed would feel mighty good.

I had dozed off to a jumbled dream where I was playing a bass fiddle, directly into the ear trumpet of a perfectly beautiful Señorita, when it happened—faintly, at first, with muted violin and humming voices—the strains of "Las Mañanitas," that hymn to the "little morning" without which no Sonora serenade is complete. Then came the voices, singing the words:

Estas son las mañanitas,
que cantaba El Rey David,
a las muchachas bonitas,
se las cantamos así.

The refrain came a little faster, but still chanted like a hymn:

Despierta mi bien despierta,
mira que ya amaneció,
ya los pajarillos cantan,
la luna ya se metió.

Finally came the bass viol and even the cornet, but muted with the player's hat. This was not a song to be blared. My friends had not forgotten me. I came to the window. A faint light showed to the east.

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"My friend," greeted Joaquin, "why did you leave so early? Was it, perhaps, the too much brandy?"

I was in a spot. I couldn't admit I was too sleepy. The brandy, although plentiful, had not bothered me, for it was drunk from a bottle, passed around; and a man could take as little as he liked, so long as he lifted it to his lips. I had to think fast. Then, suddenly, I struck the right answer.

"It is not my custom," I replied, "to sing after the first cock crows, in the morning."

"A superstition perhaps?"

"Yes, possibly."

"Then all is explained; have but one drink with us, and we shall go to our beds."

They passed the bottle through the wrought iron grating of my window. It was good brandy.

The next day I found that the serenade was a subject of polite casual conversation, in the plaza and market place.

"Did you hear the music in the night, Maria?"

"Sí, como no. Que bonita."

"Yes, it was very pretty. They were serenading Joaquin's aunt they tell me, even the Gringo helped."

THE BELLS OF SANTA CATALINA

Continued from page 12

more. It is now that great lake—there where the dam holds back the waters of the river... Only the ruined mansion stands abandoned near the bank. I have seldom gone near the place; but last year one day something prompted me to go there, and to do a little exploring. In a closet hidden behind one of the great chimneys I found an ancient iron chest. It contained no treasures, either in coin or gem, but among its sundry worthless contents I found a stained and crumbling parchment that was the grant to La Esperanza, with royal seal and signature intact.

"I did not not know at first just what to do with it, and then I decided. I placed it between cardboard and wrapped it carefully and mailed it to the present Archbishop of Granada. Maybe he can start the thing all over again... That is, if he can only get rid of the lake..."

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he Mystery of the Depleted Fortune

Continued from page 18

"Oh, yes," she had said when I interviewed her. "I know to cook many things. You see, I have worked in the city, and there I learned to cook an octopus in its ink."

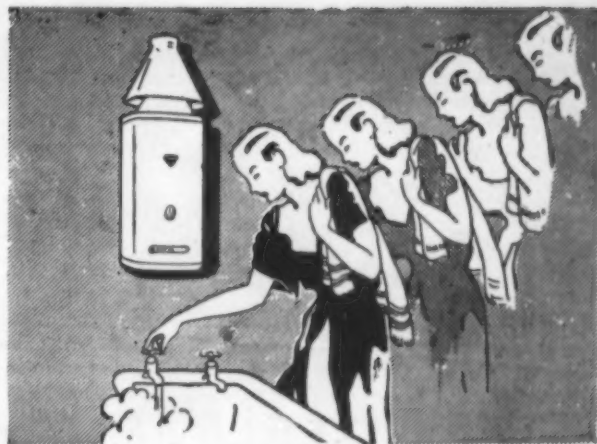
Many Indios will tell you they have worked in the city. They seem to think it gives them a diploma for whatever job they are applying for at the moment. Apolonia claimed to be able to do almost everything, and when I showed her the kitchen she gave the floor a severe glance, and said, "Very dirty. Every day, after midday in the afternoon, I shall sweep it with coffee grounds. I know about floors. And I was wondering, señor, if you wouldn't give me permission now to go down to the beach? I would like to wash my hair in the lake."

I soon found she wasn't a very good cook. She was punctual, which pleased the Professor, and she served things hot, which is always a problem for foreigners in Mexico. But she could make only a few dishes and these all Mexican, and she put chili and coriander into everything. She appeared to spend very little time in her kitchen because she was always doing something else, and wherever she was she sang in a tuneless, clattering voice or chewed bubble gum.

"What ever are you doing now?" I said, seeing her one day seated in the huerta picking apart a mattress.

"There was a bedbug, señor," she said. "So I thought I'd throw a hand to remaking it while waiting for my ollas to boil. I know about mattresses, pues."

A lot of people come down to Mexico and talk as if there weren't such a thing as a bedbug in the whole United States. Perhaps they are more noticeable in Mexico, just as in Spain the slums are more noticeable, because they always open right off the main street. And it is true that bedbugs may invade the best-kept houses or new houses. You may have them in the first six months or you may live free of them for twenty years and then suddenly acquire



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them. But look at the hovels your servants come from and you will see that bedbugs will be liable to occur anywhere until the general standard of living is raised, from the bottom upward. In warm climates bedbugs breed rapidly, and you must watch out. But if you have your bedding aired and the bed disinfected once a week, you oughtn't to be troubled. I have the beds sprayed with Formol or DDT. Or a fifty-fifty mixture of ammonia and turpentine will keep the bedbugs away, but it will probably keep you away too.

The New Fire

Continued from page 14

burst from the top of the great temple of Huitzilopochtli, and another great shout of exultation arose from the watching throng.

The gods had accepted the sacrifices; a new fire had been lighted; and for another cycle of fifty-two years the Aztecs were assured that light and heat would nourish and sustain the world, that crops would grow, that animals would live to be taken for food, and that life would continue.

Then the processions again wound along the causeways and the trails back to the villages and homes. Special emissaries from each community ran the distance to the great temple in the city, received lighted braziers from the hands of the priests and sped back along the unlighted thoroughfares, along the water-bordered lanes of earth, to bring fire to each village and community.

Then the hearth fires were kindled once more and the people of the valley were filled with happiness. In every house there was a fiesta. And feasting, drinking, and the playing of games occupied the remainder of the night, until the sun god rose again over the twin peaks which lay to the eastward.

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Health, habitations and habits

Continued from page 20

ler urban and rural communities, where the ubiquitous buzzards do yeoman's service. The importance of rodent and insect control, where possible in the screenless and makeshift houses, is not widely understood in the hinterland. Household insecticides have come into use to a commercial degree only since 1931, and rodenticides are in slight use, despite government campaigns in the field.

Food care, both in the rural markets and homes, is virtually nonexistent, with insects prevalent and refrigeration nearly unknown. Observation in the backward immunities—a sort of survival of the fittest—prevents the rural death rate from being many times what it is now: the outsider must be extremely careful of what he eats or drinks. Malnutrition, lack of restful home conditions, and insidious disease account for much of the so-called characteristic laziness often ascribed to Mexican farm and factory laborers.

Consumption of pulque, on Mexico's central mesa, is a health problem that has been attacked only lately. The maguery plant beverage, thought highly nutritious even for babies by many rural Mexicans, does have some mineral and vitamin content. The unsanitary conditions of production, however, and dubious effects on physical and mental well-being render it a health liability. Education and the production of cheap light beer for a substitute is cutting into the pulque habit. More serious is the loose manner with which widely distributed, home-grown marihuana is almost universally tolerated. Cheap and easy to get in Mexico, this drug encourages addiction to more serious narcotics, and is itself debilitating. Mexico has a grave narcotics problem, difficult to control under local conditions, though officials are co-operating well with United States authorities to curtail smuggling, especially of marihuana in wholesale lots. In 1952, troops used flame-throwers to destroy Sinaloa state opium poppy plantations.

Whetten's definitive study of rural Mexico, largely based on the 1940 census data, worked out a cultural index that indicated that 8.3 per cent of urban inhabitants and 63.2 per cent of rural inhabitants are still living today in the Indian-colonial culture pattern. That fact has an effect of making Mexico's efforts toward social, as well as political and economic, progress extremely sluggish. Random data from the 1940 census, still roughly applicable to current conditions, may clarify that point.

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SAFETY - LUXURY

Persons living in huts or hovels in Mexico constituted 40.4 per cent of the population, and 44.9 per cent of the dwellings were of that makeshift type. Some 28 per cent of the people slept on the ground or floor. In the rural communities, 72.4 per cent of the buildings were without drinking water. In fact, 56.6 per cent of the whole population lived in homes without drinking water, and 86.5 per cent lived in homes without sewage disposal. Few rural homes have bathing and laundry facilities, and extraordinarily heavy labor is required for the cleanliness achieved, which in some areas, notably Yucatan, is surprising under the conditions prevailing.

In 1940, about one in every five families have a sewing machine of some sort to help provide the clothing supply. There were only 7.5 radios per hundred families, and one telephone for every 110 inhabitants, both items occurring predominantly in urban areas. Only 38 per cent of the rural inhabitants wore shoes, with nearly a third using handmade huaraches and another third going barefoot. In the rural areas, two thirds of the people do not eat such a primary dietary requirement as wheat bread.

Obviously, these deficiencies in housing, diet, and clothing—not sufficiently improved since 1940 to change the basic pattern of national life materially—contribute to poor health and related low-level living standards. Mexico's future progress must look to improvement of those social conditions as both a cause and effect of economic development, and a tremendous informational campaign must be conducted against the social mores which add their drag to achieving the better way of life that economic development can provide. In the final analysis, Mexico's rural living standards, the worst area of the cultural lag, can be raised substantially only by increasing agricultural productivity and otherwise supplementing industrialization with improvement of the agricultural base of the national economy. That must be done if rural Mexico is to become an adequate internal market for industrial Mexico.

In conclusion, it is essential to add that attitudes on religion prevalent in Mexico pose another major social problem, in addition to the remediable tendency toward freezing social habits in pre-scientific patterns retarding the improvement of living standards, particularly public health. If the national public-health program continues to lower the death rate, while religious objection to scientific birth control continues to operate to enforce a high birth rate, the progressive population increase appears likely to outrun anything that predictable economic development and known natural resources can support generations hence. In time, economic advancement and education—by enhancing living-standard wants, in-

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creasing the average marrying age, overcoming the prevalence toward fatalism in human affairs, and related effects—may work to stabilize population in conformity with resources, but the transition appears certain to inflict regrettable hardships. Nor does the prospect of emigration, such as once relieved Italy and Ireland in similar plight, hold much hope in today's world against overpopulation threat in Mexico. The inexorable fact is that while Mexico is pushing its death rate downward toward those of the highly developed countries, its birth rate continues to run more than twice that of the United States.

Many of Mexico's religious mores, particularly in rural areas, are traceable to pagan Indian religions as well as to medieval European Catholicism, which was laid like a thin veneer over the primitive cultures. It is up to the local Catholic leaders and Mexican hierarchy—for Protestantism is a minute and static influence—to reform those religious mores to closer conformity with modern realities, a task that generally is not incompatible with Catholic beliefs and practices in the more advanced lands. This is a tremendous responsibility, fraught with dangerous controversies, but it is one that enlightened Catholic leaders should welcome and pursue to avoid the detested, and often impracticable, state mandates. Notwithstanding its admittedly extensive contributions to Mexico's cultural and moral life, the dominant Church has much to answer for, and to compensate for, in Mexico's social, economic, and political history. This touchy subject cannot be avoided rationally in any discussion of Mexico's probable progress toward an improved material existence, no matter what one's attitude on its spiritual life might be.

Religious factors are also involved in the fact that women have played such a subordinate role in Mexican politics. Women's suffrage has been delayed largely because it has been feared that the Church—notably a 'women's church' in Mexico—would control their political views and actions. Women generally remain far from being 'emancipated' in Mexico. The Spanish tradition of chivalry—plus the Indian woman's handmaiden role to the Spanish conqueror and colonizer, who seldom brought his womenfolk to the New World—gave Mexican women both a protected and a subordinate place in the national life. That picture is only slowly changing.

Co-education is still widely frowned upon, though taking hold gradually. Marriages often are still made by parental arrangement, though that practice appears to be fading rapidly. Divorce is still sufficiently scandalous to force many women to tolerate marital abuses. The double standard is far more extreme and rigid

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in Mexico than in the United States, especially in mat-
ters of sexual morality. Women's suffrage and election
to office are still confined to the municipality, though
more are being appointed to higher office and there
is no explicit constitutional ban against women enter-
ing politics for higher office. In 1952, President-elect
Adolfo Ruiz Cortines promised women full suffrage.

Women in professional life are increasing in num-
ber, but are still something of an oddity outside the
metropolitan areas. In rural areas, women lead a life
of unending toil, even to the point of serving as beasts
of burden, but have a strong voice in home manage-
ment. North American movies, widely distributed in
Mexico, are noticeably getting over the idea, for good
or bad, of the emancipated woman, as conceived in
the United States. Education, as influenced by the
Revolution, is tending to lift the status of women.
Women are guaranteed by the constitution equal pay
for equal work and are protected in industrial and
business work during motherhood, though these prin-
ciples are far from being universally respected in
practice.

Fiesta

Continued from page 10

including me. The place sounded like a boiler fac-
tory. The pipes leading to the shower were still
cold although the water-heater was going full blast.
I went to get Lupe, but he had vanished into
thin air. When I returned to the bathroom no one
yet made any important discoveries. Finally I hap-
pened to notice that the staccatolike noise was com-
ing from the toilet, and after a brief investigation I
discovered that the toilet bowl was seething with boil-
ing water. Further investigation proved that the only
heated pipes were those leading to the toilet! Obvious-
ly Lupe had enjoyed his tequila during the construc-
tion of the bathroom as well as during its inaugura-
tion!

Many months later the bathroom was completed
anew, but there was no fiesta. As a matter of fact
Roy grew bored with our village and left within the
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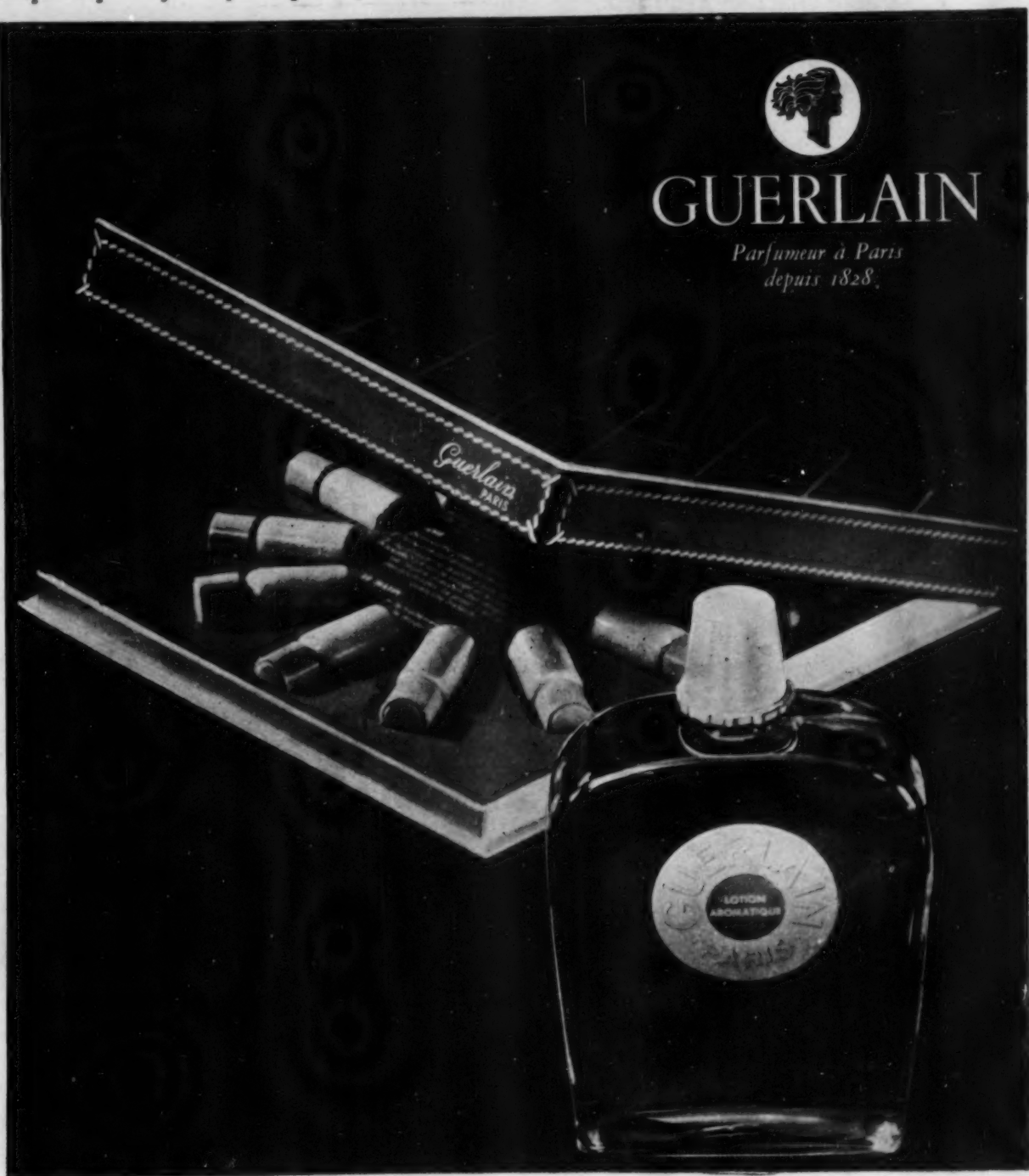


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